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CONTENTS

COMMENTS . . . . . . Page 233
THE POLITICS OF FRUSTRATION . . . 235
MR. CHURCHILL'S CONCEPTION OF VICTORY. By Harold J. Laski 235
NON-VIOLENCE. By Kingsley Martin . 236
A LONDON DIARY. By Critic . . . 237
THIS ENGLAND 238
LET MEN DELIGHT . . . By Sagittarius . 238
THE PATRIOTIC FURRIER. By Morys Gascoyen 238
CRISIS IN THE BOOK WORLD . . . 239
THE WEEK. By Y. Y. 239
CONTEMPORARY ART. By Clive Bell. . 240
THE MOVIES. By William Whitebait . 240
PLAYS AND PICTURES 240
CORRESPONDENCE 241
From Prof. W. K. Hancock; W. T. McVittie; L. J. Cadbury; W. P. Robson; Elisaveta Fen; Leonard Cohen; Georgina Battiscombe.
BOOKS IN GENERAL. By A. L. Rowse Page 243
REVIEWS:
A Victorian Adventure. By Raymond Mortimer 243
American Scholarship. By Harold J. Laski 244
For Adults Only. By Alan Pryce-Jones 245
The Expansion of Genetics. By C. H. Waddington 246
The Sinews of War. By Quentin Bell . 246
WEEK-END COMPETITIONS . . . 247

WHAT KIND OF DEFENCE ?

THE Japanese advance has swept on to the gates of India. The preliminary air raids have begun; the first attack has been made on the harbour of Colombo. Meanwhile discussion continues in India about the kind of defence to be organised. That is the immediate issue of Sir Stafford Cripps's mission. Not long ago there would have been no doubt: the Imperial Army would have been expected to hold India while the mass of Indians would have been passively hostile or indifferent or exponents of non-violent resistance to the invader. That is changed. From the outbreak of the war Congress has announced its hostility to the Axis. It has asked only that in participating in the war it should be its own freedom and not the victory of the white race in Asia, for which it should fight. Since then its leaders have been gaoled; they are now released and discuss with Sir Stafford, with Mr. Roosevelt's envoy, with General Wavell and with the leaders of other Indian groups the methods and conditions of the fight. Which pattern is to be followed? In Malaya, where the population, half Chinese, was divided; in Burma, where Japan's propaganda made rapid progress in face of our Imperial intransigeance? General Wavell at least will have learnt the lesson; he is thinking, we presume, in terms not of Malay or Burma, but rather of China, where the common citizen still successfully resists the savage threat to his freedom and his civilisation.

Sir Stafford, General Wavell, Nehru and the rest of the Indian leaders all know that India cannot be effectively defended by the Indian army alone. It is unlikely, if the people of India are divided or hostile, to be much more efficient than other British armies have been against the Japanese. The attitude of the people of India will be, in the long run, the decisive matter. Why, then, haggle now over the constitutional details of defence? The enemy is upon us. If Japan conquers India, her aspirations to freedom will be defeated for generations. If India, with British help, defends herself, India will be in a position to take her own freedom at the end of the war, whatever the formal powers granted to an Indian Member of the Defence Council. General Wavell must in any case be technically in command of the fighting; no one, least of all Nehru, disputes that. The leaders of Indian opinion must have the authority to rally the people, to recruit the soldiers, to convince India that the battle is worth their fighting if they are indeed to fight—does Mr. Churchill or anyone doubt that? Lord Halifax, in a deplorable speech from the United States, does apparently deny or ignore the facts; his speech seemed to assume the failure of Sir Stafford and then to suggest that the attitude of the main groups of Indian opinion was unimportant. The question for us if we are asking Indians to undergo the immeasurable horrors of war is whether there are the weapons or the enthusiasm or the human or material conditions for mass civilian defence, and, if so, where it should be organised and on what fronts.

We assume that the next Japanese attack is against India. The Australians, preparing against invasion without the handicap of any discussion about whether they can be trusted with their own Home Guard or their own Minister of Defence, may yet have a period of reprieve. In menacing Australia, we take it that Japan's immediate object is to contain there as large Allied forces as possible while her naval units—with bases extended to the Solomons and possibly Fiji—harass communications between Australia and the U.S.A. If Japan can meanwhile secure bases in India, she would presumably proceed to a naval blockade of the Red Sea. At the same time, General Rommel, now again on the move in Libya, will endeavour to defeat the British 8th Army, and if Malta can be put out of action for effective purposes by the present violent *Luftwaffe* assaults, the Axis army in the desert will be heavily reinforced for a drive against Suez. From the German standpoint, since the bulk of the Axis land forces will be required for the Russian front and the garrisoning of occupied territories, the success of this ambitious plan depends essentially on Japan's ability to cut British lines of sea-borne supplies round the Cape to the Red Sea and Persian Gulf. This in turn is dependent on Japanese occupation of Ceylon and the principal Indian seaports. Hence the appearance of Japanese aircraft carriers in the Indian Ocean. Hence, the increased vigour of the Japanese land offensive in Burma—an offensive whose dual aim is clearly to isolate the Chinese from the West and to obtain aerodromes from which to bomb Calcutta. We have yet to learn what naval measures the Allies are taking to deny to Japan the command of the Indian Ocean. So far as Burma is concerned the communiques make depressing reading. Once again, numerically inferior British forces are being subjected to continuous dive-bombing without any sort of fighter cover from their own side. India's apparent inability to send any air support to Burma is difficult to comprehend.

The next phase of the war would seem to depend chiefly on two factors. The first is the possible organisation of an effective defence of India, which is only possible if the Indians passionately know that in accepting the measureless horror of war they are fighting for their own liberties. The second is the capacity of the U.S.S.R. to maintain its defence against a German attack which must be directed with greater fury than ever before against the Russian armies. To Hitler the rest must seem comparatively unimportant. He contains troops elsewhere: he threatens the Suez: he turns the heat on Turkey, or Sweden, or Spain, or Vichy. But his immediate objective this spring must be the defeat of Russia and the seizure of her oil supplies. Axis strategy is precise; it is to be hoped in the next decisive months that that of the United Nations is also unified.

Home Front (*by an Industrial Correspondent*).

The home front has gone all quiet after the upsets of a few weeks ago. But this means only that the influence of home conditions is exerted in less obvious ways. For example, the profound reports created by the methods of collecting income tax from the wage-earners are less talked about in public than they were a little while ago; but the sore is festering as badly as ever, and, unless a thorough remedy is applied in this coming Budget, discontent is certain to break out on a startling scale in the very near future. We may hope that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or at any rate his official advisers, are by now aware of this, and that the remedy will be rational. But there are other causes of unrest which lie deeper still, and are much less easy to deal with. The war workers have stood the fatigues and hardships of travel over a long winter with very little complaint, despite the fact that there has been no blitz to key them up to a sense of the need for heroism. But there can be no doubt that many of them are intensely tired, and in a mood which could easily turn into war-weariness. It does not overtly take this turn mainly because nobody can really see any alternative to going through with the war to the bitter end. But, even so, it does react upon output and engender a certain irritability which finds for the most part only dangerous vents in the hunt for somebody to blame. This is the more serious because, as I pointed out last week, we are now practically at the end of our programme of building new factories, and of the means of manning new ones even if they could be built. The further expansion of output therefore depends mainly on making better use of the resources of plant and man-power already in employment; and this is at least as much a matter of keeping the workers in a good mood as of anything else. What this means is not that we ought to try to increase the work-time of the operators: on the contrary, I am sure we ought in many cases to be cutting it down. The way to expand output now is to diminish, and not to increase, the worker's strain.

* * *

The practical moral of this is that everything possible ought to be done to reduce the waste of time travelling to and from work. This is much the largest source of expended energy that produces nothing; and I am sure those in charge of policy are being much too fatalistic about it. One hears complaints from officials that the workers refuse to live in the hostels that have been provided in the neighbourhood of some of the big new factories, and prefer to travel long distances to and from home. The conclusion is drawn that it is of no use to spend man-power on buildings; and as the transport authorities hold out no hope of better travel facilities, it is argued that nothing can be done. Accordingly, we are now in process of scaling down the building industry to an alarming extent in order to find more recruits for the armed forces. I maintain that this view is radically wrong, and that we ought to turn the workers who are no longer needed for building factories or air-raid shelters or aerodromes over in large numbers to building houses, repairing homes seriously damaged by air raids, and providing amenity buildings as well as houses in the neighbourhood of big war factories remote from centres of urban life. I contend that this policy would pay in terms of increased factory output, and would be of more value towards winning the war than the diversion of so many thousands of building operatives into the armed forces.

* * *

Mr. Lyttelton's speech on his plans to reorganise production electrified the House of Commons. Like the first speech of Sir Stafford Cripps a new departure was promised. Yet hardly had Cripps promised the sterner life when the usual protests by vested interests were heard and the usual qualifications were made by the Government. There was some progress towards a rational consumption policy. But no new departure. Two weeks have now passed since Mr. Lyttelton's speech. The announcement of the appointment of a "prominent industrialist" to be Director of the Production Division is still to come. No news has been published that the other important new staffs have begun work.

What was announced, however, is the appointment of Sir George Beharrell to be Director General of Controls in the Ministry of Supply, co-ordinating the work of these glorified instruments of private monopoly. Mr. Lyttelton has stated that this work will be his domain and that it will be his staff which will be responsible for the policy and co-ordination of controls and the actual work of allocating raw materials. It would be hoped that by this method the insidious influences now prevailing could be paralysed without an upheaval. The new Director General, however, was a member of the Rubber Control Board and, though not a Controller, closely associated with the Control whose work was most bitterly criticised.

Inefficient distribution and use of labour and lack of enthusiasm in the workers can be remedied only by a reorganisation of the industrial structure. This reorganisation was implied by Mr. Lyttelton's speech. It would be serious if the hope were to be disappointed.

* * *

Another problem that is not unconnected with what I have been saying is that of juvenile crime. We are working our adolescents too hard; we are giving them hardly any chance of learning a trade either by apprenticeship or by technical education—both processes which markedly foster self-respect; and we are leaving very many of them with nothing to do out of work hours except get into mischief. We ought to do all that is possible to maintain real apprenticeship, despite the unfavourable conditions created by the demand for the highest possible immediate output. We ought to reopen and expand technical schools and courses, and compel employers to allow time off for attending them. We ought, over and above what should be done for grown-ups, to pay special attention to providing for adolescent workers the means of healthy recreation. The main factor in juvenile delinquency is not the demoralising effect of war on the adolescent mind; it is the disastrous deterioration of the environment in which these young people have to live.

French Imbroglio

To examine the politics of France is like taking the lid off a barrelful of snakes. For the removal of the better elements in French political life to the Free French colonies abroad, or to fortresses and concentration camps at home, has not produced unity in subjection. Far otherwise, the men in public life are as discordant as ever: and range from the decent public-spirited mayors and officials who stick to their posts and try to mitigate the demands of the local German *Kommandatur* in the Occupied Zone, and those of the *Légionnaires* in the Unoccupied Zone, to the despicable tools of Germany, intriguing and stinging each other in Paris and Vichy. Three months ago, Marshal Pétain held a conference of the National Council of his Legion, the French equivalent of the German S.A.; he found it necessary to scold them for a "rigid attitude, over-hasty decisions and far-reaching demands," which had annoyed the officials on whom legionnaries are imposed as censors. In February all the Prefects, including those from the Occupied and Forbidden Zones, were summoned to Vichy and made to swear "fidelity to the person of the Head of the State." This naturally does not mean that Pétain, and much less Darlan, is sure of their fidelity; on the contrary. The *Times* last Monday had a message from its "French Frontier" correspondent, recounting a series of involved and sinister moves. There are two views in Germany in the future of France. Stülpnagel, Himmler and others want to abolish the Vichy Manchukuo, and to annex and to govern France directly through Gauleiters, using her fleet and empire as their own. This seems to be a "generals' policy." Ribbentrop and Abetz, the ambassador in Paris, and possibly Göring, want to go on with the armistice "collaboration," which can always be screwed tighter. Under Stülpnagel's influence, the Parisian political scum, headed by de Monzie have plotted a "French National Government." They invited in Laval, but that expert double-crosser having looked at his company and accepted their offer, sent his son-in-law to blow the gaff to Pétain. Thereupon the Marshal summoned him to Vichy, where Laval offered him the choice of a de Monzie government in Paris, or his own reinstatement as Vice-President of the Council at Vichy. He did not meet Darlan: there is no room for two kings at Vichy, and Pétain must probably choose between Darlan and Laval. Over these sordid wrigglings stands the German menace: the suspension of the Riom trials, which had become little less than an indictment of the present régime, and the removal of the *Dunkerque* to Toulon, indicate that Germany is ready, at her convenient time, to take France outright. She may be deterred by the steadily growing hatred of the French people, and the certainty that she would have to spend enormous energy and force in suppressing them. Also the collaborationist spirit of the Unoccupied Zone would certainly become as recalcitrant as that of the North. On balance Germany would probably lose, not gain, in strength.

John Mair

John Mair was killed on Active Service, flying over the Channel last week. He was twenty-six. He had served in the R.A.F. for two years and was about to receive his commission. His work for this journal in the years before the war made him a reputation as one of the liveliest of our young writers. His reviews of novels, which many readers (and some novelists) will remember, were always witty, occasionally erratic, and—what was rare in his generation—both caustic and learned. He wrote two books: *The Fourth Forger*, a brilliant life of William Ireland, whose Shakespeare forgeries deceived even Dr. Johnson; and a novel not yet published, a thriller written with ferocious gusto. He had many friends, and perhaps his conversation was more remarkable than his writings; he would improvise, till four in the morning, restlessly and indefatigably on almost any subject. His mixture of talents (scholarship and parody were among them) came from distinguished parents. His father, G. H. Mair, was one of the most versatile and brilliant of *Manchester Guardian* writers, and his mother is Maire O'Neill, the actress.

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THE POLITICS OF FRUSTRATION

Six by-elections amount to a miniature general election, and the result of the contest at Grantham shows that these elections will be seriously fought. The protagonists will not be the main political parties which are supposed in time of peace to represent the main trends of political thought and the main groupings of organised interest. In this series of elections Conservative, Labour and Liberal candidates will be on one side, fighting to hold seats now occupied by their parties; against them will be a variety of individuals, some with party labels and some with none, all alike in responding in one way or another to the popular feeling of frustration and the popular desire for action. The importance of the Grantham election is that for the first time since the party truce was proclaimed at the beginning of the war the electorate voted against the Government candidate and put into Parliament "a non-party and frustration candidate." (So we may call Mr. Kendall, who seems to have shown his contempt for all parties by having affiliations with all three.)

The conditions of Grantham were not exceptional, and the immediate result of this victory will be to convince candidates of various political complexions that no industrial or semi-industrial seat is now safe against a well-directed onslaught. The party truce may continue, but the fight will become more sharp against the established parties which, with varying degrees of justice, are increasingly associated in the minds of the electors with the policies that led up to the war, with the inefficiency shown in its organisation, with the muddles and the inequalities of sacrifice inseparable from the existing order, and with fears lest this order be perpetuated after the war itself.

The dangers as well as the possibilities of good in this situation are obvious. Democracy has only worked reasonably well because entry into Parliament has been an honour sought by candidates who have been sponsored, vetted and kept within the bounds of coherent policy by the party system. An occasional free-lance of unusual calibre has found his way to Westminster, but in general the ambitious individual has been disciplined and taught to seek power within the framework of party. What other safeguard is there against the atomisation of politics which leads to the anarchy of many groups jostling for position? We have enough Continental examples of democracy first becoming absurd and then falling an easy prey to a disciplined Fascist party that, denouncing all parties, seeks itself to be the one all-sufficient and all-powerful party. The decay of the party system, hastened by the political truce, is one of the many signs of incipient Fascism. Distrust of politicians, widely expressed among men and women in every Service and in every walk of life, is a familiar feature of the pre-Fascist landscape.

In a remarkable article called "A Silent Revolution" by an officer in the British Army, which we published a few weeks ago, a summary was given of the tendencies favouring the formation of a "new party" which, only too obviously in the circumstances, might well be a Fascist party with an emollient label. The author pointed out that if the war and the party truce continue for another two years few of those with whom he talked in the Army would know whether Mr. Morrison, Sir Archibald Sinclair or Lord Croft were Conservative, Labour or Liberal. They are all becoming the "old gang" associated with defeat abroad and social stagnation at home. This may be very unjust; the unfortunate members of the present Government can fairly point to difficulties unequalled in any former period; they may say that no alternative government would have done better in the stress of events since the fall of France. Just or not, however, that is the tendency of opinion; the fact that the outlook of those who rule us and the system under which we live are tragically out of date is obvious to everyone. The minds of Ministers and of the increasingly elderly Parliament, which was elected in the already remote and forgotten world of 1935, seem quite incapable of realising the speed and magnitude of this Silent Revolution. New candidates can appeal to the profound discontent about the conduct of the war, about the part played in it by vested interests, about the failure to organise for the conditions of siege and to show that the war is not only Russia's war; as time goes on they will increasingly appeal to the complete scepticism which the voter, whether in uniform or not, begins to feel about the system which led to the war, seems to prevent its being efficiently fought and offers no convincing hope for the future. They see nothing sacrosanct in the established system of private ownership, and they dread post-war unemployment. They no longer believe in the old system of sovereign States, of ill-regulated currencies and of armament firms supplying the future enemy with the shells to use against the workers who make them.

The whole of this pre-war order is beginning to look as economically and socially absurd as the military ideas and organisation of the War Office in 1939. If the main political parties do not represent this revolution of the spirit, then candidates of many less orthodox types must arise; so far we have the Pemberton Billing type of candidate, who expresses frustration in terms of a demand for increased savagery; we have a manufacturer with a local reputation like the successful Mr. Kendall; we have an I.L.P. candidate like Mr. Brockway, who does at least express the universal loathing of war; we note among those entering the lists a representative of Big Business like the Hon. L. H. Cripps and a young Conservative like Bernard Acworth with a more technical approach than that of the ordinary candidate. We notice about these candidates that they all express frustration and atomisation in politics; we note that with the example of Grantham in front of them the numbers of independent candidates will increase, and so will the danger of the irresponsible appeal to violence and nationalism in a situation that demands co-operation and constructive thinking. But Pericles is not necessarily followed by Cleon nor Cleon by Hyperbolus.

There is only one remedy—to provide this Silent Revolution with a responsible leadership and a constructive policy. We notice some signs that this urgent necessity is beginning to be understood within the Labour Party. The tide of discontent is flowing and may reach its flood at its Whitsun Conference. How long, people ask, can the group of lively critics in the Parliamentary party accept the limitations of political truce? Will the Party Conference be ready merely to acclaim the new reconstruction programme accepted by the Executive and then, forgetful of the ironic smiles of those who recall "homes for heroes," depart for another year of frustration in the sure knowledge that nothing whatever will be done except once more to go on record in favour of pie-in-the-sky-when-we-die? Professor Laski, in a recent article in the *Daily Herald*, went so far as to say that if the present Government does not realise that social change is essential for morale, essential as part of the strategy of victory, and does not now, during the war, lay the foundations of a society in which common men can believe, he for his part would prefer to see Labour outside the Government. How far Mr. Laski will carry the Labour Party with him in this preference, when the test comes, we can only guess. But on one point we speak with certainty—the younger type of opinion in this country, whether attached to the Labour Party or not, will not much longer be influenced by any party truce or plea from party leaders; it will not be fobbed off with promises that vested interests shall no longer restrict production or be in a position after the war to condemn the demobilised soldier again to sell matches in the gutter. If the Labour Party accepts the lead offered by such men as Mr. Laski it may still save part of the electorate from the rot of idleness and cynicism. But we must add that there are now large sections of the disillusioned public which will not give support to any existing party. They are unattached and wait the ambitious gleaner. We suggest that in by-elections, where the party truce now condemns the citizen to vote without party guidance, an effort should now be made by Progressives and Socialists to see that responsible and independent candidates who would strengthen the democratic forces in the House of Commons stand in constituencies where the forces of progress would otherwise be unrepresented. These candidates should be nationally known, and they would actually be backed both nationally and locally by men and women who carry weight with dissident Labour and Liberal voters. A makeshift policy, perhaps; but one that may at least serve to keep the democratic forces of this country from drifting to disaster. Incidentally, the appearance of some candidates saying unofficially what most Labour people are thinking, but cannot say because of the political truce, would have a marked effect on the Labour Party itself. Only the threat that discontent in the constituencies may lead to a new political grouping on the Left is likely seriously to arouse from somnolence men secure in office.

MR. CHURCHILL'S CONCEPTION OF VICTORY

It is one of the best qualities in the Prime Minister that he does not conceal the premises of his thinking. His mind has a clarity of approach to the problems before him that enables us fully to see how they present themselves to him. The war, for him, is a struggle between Great Britain and its Allies, as going concerns, on the one hand, and the Axis Powers on the other, in which the end is victory conceived as the military defeat of the enemy. He does not think of victory as something related intimately and inescapably to what occurs within the going concerns as they are organised for the purpose of battle. The degree to which war changes the foundations of our society hardly interests him. Victory for him is survival of certain national entities whose life is threatened. What they are to survive for he does not seriously examine, except in rhetorical terms. He is sure—and rightly sure—that the Grand Alliance, by surviving, gives to freedom and democracy a chance of life not otherwise open to them. But he does not appear to understand that the very organisation which is built for victory may, unless we are careful, of itself threaten the freedom and democracy he is so nobly anxious to preserve. His conception of victory is static and not dynamic. He does not seem to see that the steps we take now necessarily determine the shape of the society we shall enter when the war is over.

This static conception was, I think, made very clear when he spoke, on March 26, to the Central Council of the Conservative Party. He mentioned the efforts made to interest him in the rebuilding of the post-war world. He agreed that measures must be taken "by study and planning" to prepare for it. But we must, he added, "be above all things careful that nothing diverts or distracts our thoughts or our fullest energies from the task of national self-preservation and of inter-allied duty which will require the total concentration for an indefinite period of all that we can give."

The vital premise of this argument is the simple one that, at the end of the war, we can turn to the tasks of reconstruction as something apart from the shape we have given to society by the impact of the war-effort. It assumes that freedom and democracy will then present problems the proportions of which are the same as when we entered the war, that the forces and relations which determine their content will not have changed as a result of the immense changes in the economic and social structure of Britain. It implies that the psychological habits of our politics will, under those changed conditions, enable democratic institutions to function very much as though we resumed discussion where it had broken off on September 3, 1939.

It is surely clear that this is a wholly mistaken attitude. For it is obvious that the concentration of industry, the immense technological changes, the shift in the distribution of the population, will have given a new framework to economic relationships. The demands of the war induce a temper of experiment which will not easily continue in the peace. People accept to-day, for example, a level of taxation devoted to objectives about which, after victory, they would quarrel fiercely. Mr. Bevin can secure the guaranteed week in wartime; would employers, conditioned to the profit-making motive, accept its implications when peace comes? We have full employment in wartime. What will occur if, with victory, we attempt to make an economic system function in which, as the inter-war years showed, mass-unemployment and distressed areas were endemic? If it be agreed, as most thinkers are agreed, that the age of *laisser-faire* is over, that the planned society is inevitable in some form, is it not wiser to agree about the objectives of planning at a time when the gravity of our danger makes us all deeply aware of how much we have in common, than to wait until the danger is passed, when the differences which divide us will be far more obvious to our minds?

Mr. Churchill is, of course, as leader of the Tory Party, rightly anxious that no doctrinal differences shall impede the national unity; and he rightly objects to any plea for changes that are urged on Party grounds. But if it be common doctrine that the planned society is inevitable, as I believe it is, the issue of whether we are to plan for the many or for the few is a national issue which transcends all claims of party. The problem we have then to face is whether, granted the character of the economic forces the war-effort is shaping, it will be possible, after victory, to get agreement to the measures which planning for the many involves. Those measures raise, inescapably, the place of privilege in our society. If we face that issue now, when we are mindful of our identities, we can do so with some confidence that, as the war ends, the framework within which democratic institutions can function in the post-war period is already built. If we evade the issue, the disparities of an unequal society will make agreement upon necessary measures as difficult and as doubtful as it was three centuries ago this summer. For men who live so differently are always, in the absence of external danger, tempted to think too differently to hold the great ends of life in common.

The Prime Minister must be aware that, in the course of the last forty years, the idea of freedom is set in a new context for the masses. It has come to mean for them something which far transcends the narrow political content with which the nineteenth century was satisfied. That has been seen by President Roosevelt when he made freedom from want and fear two of the Four Freedoms which he postulated as fundamental. Democracy in the post-war world is unthinkable unless it means economic security and economic opportunity for the many. But Mr. Churchill must know that neither of these was possible upon the premises of what he calls "traditional" Britain. He must know, too, that the shape of the war-effort, so far, implies a post-war structure in which, as things are to-day, they will be still less possible than in 1939. Is his vision of a victorious Britain one merely of bigger and better doles as the price paid by privilege to numb in the masses the profound conviction of social injustice?

I cannot believe that it is; for Mr. Churchill, when he gives his mind to a problem fully, has rarely failed to display the aristocrat's capacity for magnanimity. If, therefore, he seeks to probe this issue in an imaginative way, he must be capable of seeing that this is not, in the narrow sense, a party question, but one on which the whole future of our country turns. Not to decide it while the minds of men are open to great changes is not a postponement of a discussion; it is the loss of that mental climate which gives reason its full place in future discussion. For the brief summary of Mr. Churchill's present policy—not, no doubt, of set intention, but in logical result—is to use the passionate faith of the masses in the need to defeat Nazism to strengthen the essential foundations of privilege in this country; and that result is not, he may be sure, obscured from them by the fact that its cost has been a few minor social reforms, most of which, like the increase in old-age pensions, had been overdue these twenty years.

If Mr. Churchill, in fact, gave himself the time to reflect upon this problem afresh, he would see that a revolution has taken place in the outlook of the masses upon matters of economic and social constitution, and that this revolution is now seeking the appropriate forms for its central principles. It is this which, at least in part, explains the profound enthusiasm among them for the achievements of our Russian ally. It is this, also, which gave its symbolic importance to the entry of Sir Stafford Cripps into the War Cabinet. It is this which has created the widespread impatience with, even indifference to, the relations of the historic parties. People everywhere feel the deep conviction that the war is in fact a revolutionary epoch in our history; and they resent the effort of party machines and party leaders to evade its implications at a moment when the historical situation offers us the prospect of that psychological flexibility which permits a swift access to a new social equilibrium.

It may be, of course, that his inevitable immersion in the daily claims of this gigantic war deprives Mr. Churchill of that wider perspective of its meaning it is so urgent the Prime Minister should acquire. "Those who can win a war well," he has himself written, "can rarely make a good peace, and those who could make a good peace would never have won the war." It is a disturbing thought, for it involves the premise that the constructive qualities necessary to use a war wisely are denied to the leader who wages it. Yet it was not true of Abraham Lincoln, who waged a war of emancipation which was also a revolution, a war the inner nature of which closely resembles our own. It need not be true of Mr. Churchill himself if he would only look at the problem from that eminence above party in which he has been placed by his service to the nation. It would not be true, either, if he remembered how profound an effect upon the victims of the Axis Powers would be the spectacle of a great nation at war preparing to meet the central issue of our time as part of the fulfilment of the democracy for which it is fighting. Not least, it would not be true if he measured the immense impact it would have upon our influence with our Allies, above all with the Soviet Union. Mr. Churchill expressed the hope that, when peace came, the party he leads would prove "the main part of the rock on which the salvation of Britain was founded and the freedom of mankind regained." That hope, if I may say so, will be widely shared. But the main clue to its realisation lies in the chance that Mr. Churchill may teach it, while there is still time, to understand that our own salvation and a free world are both alike dependent upon a dynamic conception of victory.

HAROLD J. LASKI

NON-VIOLENCE

On Monday, April 6, the *Daily Express* published an interview given by Mr. Gandhi to its war correspondent in New Delhi, Alan Moorehead. I find it fascinating reading. Mr. Moorehead was obviously deeply impressed by Mr. Gandhi. What he expected I can only guess; he found humour, courtesy and shrewdness combined with deep conviction. "Gandhi is charming, of course, and has the overwhelming advantage in argument from being absolutely convinced he is right." Mr. Moorehead had obviously no previous experience of philosophic pacifism. He tried to sum up Gandhi's point of view in a phrase: "It takes two to make a quarrel. If one side won't fight, then the other gives in." Gandhi explained that China, in his view, had made a mistake in resisting and that India like China could absorb the Japs if it adopted a policy of non-violent resistance. The Japs could never destroy all the 350 million Indians. They would have to stop killing sometime. "It is not human to go on killing where there is no resistance." Mr. Gandhi also stated a basic, but often misunderstood, point about the philosophy of non-violent resistance when he remarked that it was not necessary that it should always be successful, any more than any form of resistance is necessarily always successful. Those who resist non-violently may be killed, just as soldiers may be killed, and the brand of courage required is even more difficult to attain than that of the soldier. All this, faithfully reported, was clearly strange doctrine to Mr. Moorehead. He was clearly surprised to find no convincing answer to Mr. Gandhi's thesis. He could only remark that though a large number of Indians reverenced Mr. Gandhi, most of them no doubt realised that it was impossible to carry out his creed—"in this war anyhow." Gandhi, he says, "simply does not think along European lines." That is quite true. But Mr. Moorehead might have noticed that everything the Mahatma had said was a twentieth-century restatement of the fifth chapter of the Gospel according to St. Matthew. Europe has never thought along Christian lines.

That Gandhi should only be in a position to state this philosophy as a personal view after resigning from any official position in Congress is, for better or worse, a matter of the greatest importance. Jawaharal Nehru, Gandhi's devoted follower, educated in the West, and moved by knowledge of the meaning of Nazism, has long found it impossible to adhere to the Mahatma's creed. As an Indian Nationalist he has been compelled by events to discard the nominal Christianity which the Western man so incongruously professes side by side with his fighting creed. I have discussed these problems with both these Indian leaders in the past. Nehru is a man of reason, hating violence, but he is no mystic. He is prepared to rouse India to fight Fascism; he only asked that it should be India's freedom and not the British Empire for which he has to ask his countrymen to fight.

So, unhappily, passes the one chance offered of testing the non-violent creed on a national scale. Many in India will remain exponents of non-violence, even if the Japs are burning their villages, but others will form a Home Guard and there will not in any case be the practical unanimity essential for a thorough experiment.

Two factors appear to me to account for this defection from non-violence in the one country in the world where it had reached the dimensions of a national faith. Other-worldliness and the capacity to bear evil with dignity and without retaliation seem qualities that come more naturally to Indians than to other peoples. For a time during British repression we saw in India the example of a country really obeying the precept to turn the other cheek and attempting to overcome evil with good. If that experiment is not repeated to-day I think it is because of the realisation by the leaders of Indian opinion who have been convinced, just as many British pacifists have been convinced, that with modern weapons and modern methods of propaganda the conquering invader may fasten his talons far more deeply in the country than ever in the past. He will begin by finding in that country those who will rule it for him. He will not need, as Mr. Gandhi suggests, to kill all those he conquers; he will need simply to occupy their territory and so to educate their children that they are no longer dangerous to the occupying power. He may make revolt impossible—that the British have never done. He will destroy the very possibility of discussion. He will prevent dangerous thoughts by destroying the literature and breaking up the associations out of which freedom has the chance to arise. Non-violent resistance in such circumstances may continue, and may be individually successful, but politically it is difficult to believe that it stands a reasonable chance of success. The second argument which should have affected the minds of men like Nehru is that, however successful non-violent resistance may be, it provides no positive basis for the future. A high British official in India once told me that the Indians might have driven the British out of India if they had followed Gandhi's non-violent doctrines. By turning to violence, at which we were better than they, they made things easier for Britain. That was because the British Tommy had a conscience about beating up unarmed men and the British public disliked aggressive Imperialism. But supposing Congress had been successful and the British had been forced to withdraw, then, however triumphant Congress would have been, Gandhi, at the head of the Government, would have had to behave as a head of the Government. Would he not have had to use force if necessary to prevent Fascist risings or Fascist invasions? And if he were prepared to use police, where draw the line between them and soldiers, if Fascism, national or international, were armed? Non-violence is an individual technique of holiness which may in certain circumstances be the best technique for resistance, but it cannot be the basis on which a State is founded, for its character is essentially negative, and the State by definition involves coercion.

KINGSLEY MARTIN

A LONDON DIARY

Two years ago when I last visited Dublin the first parachutist had been reported in the Free State and Hitler was knocking down the countries of the West like so many ninepins. "Neutrality" seemed unlikely to last long. To-day Dublin seems less anxious. Neutrality has proved unexpectedly possible so far. Neutrality has become a unifying conception. It is almost a dynamic! How many sons of the I.R.A. now desire a different policy I don't know. There is a Communist wing, tiny in numbers, that wants to aid in the war now that Russia is in; there is another I.R.A. element that is militantly pro-German. There is a small Anglo-Irish group that wants definitely to help Britain. Mr. De Valera speaks for the vast majority when he declares that Ireland is a genuine neutral which will fight any invader. And most people I met are now sure that Britain is not the likely aggressor. They know that the small Irish army could make but little show against a German invasion. But they just hope neutrality will last and meanwhile they go on with the old laughter and gaiety and poverty, some favouring Germany (particularly, I'm told, in Co. Kerry), some favouring Britain, but the great majority, if one can generalise at all, wanting to see the British Empire get a good knock, but not wanting Germany to win. Economically Ireland is wholly dependent on Britain. I should say that they really want all the belligerents defeated. In some parts of the West, I'm told, they say, "This is no kind of an old war at all. We don't get nearly all we ought." In the last war the flotsam and jetsam from sinkings was far more considerable.

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All this, of course, is discussed privately. But not any more in public. Censorship and the habit of Mr. De Valera have killed politics in Ireland. Nothing was ever so uncontroversial as the Dublin papers. A bit of war news, an occasional summary of the strategic position by very competent and objective military correspondents. Little editorial comment on anything; no criticism of the Government; nothing that could offend Germany or be interpreted as disrespectful to Britain. This censorship goes a long way. Neutral though opinion is, the Irish are proud of the fact that many Irish boys are fighting on the British side, that some have died and some earned high decorations (one of the Swordfish pilots who went down with the attack on the *Gneisenau* and *Scharnhorst* was a conspicuous example). The numbers of Irish fighting on the British side is large. I have heard surprising estimates in well-informed quarters. But the Irish press may make no reference to this unneutral behaviour by Irish youth. The *Irish Times*, often in hot water with the censor, managed a reference to one of its staff who went down on the *Repulse* by publishing a photograph of the victim of the "recent boating accident." I heard the editor of the *Irish Times*, Mr. R. M. Smyllie, make a powerful attack on the censorship at the closing meeting of the Book Fair in Dublin. Mr. MacManus, the editor of the rival De Valera paper, the *Irish Press*, was in the chair. It was quite an occasion. A large audience of intelligentsia heard an outspoken attack on the black market in white bread—a notorious scandal which the press may not mention. Mr. Smyllie attacked not censorship as such; he admitted that in the circumstances some censorship was unavoidable. But he complained that he was administered by civil servants whose training and interest always leads them to say "better not." I turned with interest to the Dublin papers next morning. They contained no report of Mr. Smyllie's speech.

Anti-British feeling is still deep in Ireland, and it is on that that German propaganda still plays effectively. I don't mean that you will see German propaganda in print, but you will meet traces of Dr. Goebbels all over the place. The assumption that this is nothing but another imperial war between Britain and Germany with no issues that need concern Irishmen is commonly made. Censorship prevents any knowledge of the meaning of the Nazi movement from spreading in Ireland. I believe the Vatican's denunciation of the Nazi treatment of the church in Poland has never been published in Eire, and books that describe German behaviour in occupied countries are not in circulation and are regarded, in so far as they are known, merely as further examples of British propaganda. Oddly enough, some of the most violent pro-Axis views are to be found among survivors of the "Ascendancy." There are only a handful of Jews in Ireland and yet there is incipient anti-Semitism. I was astonished on one occasion to meet a fluffy-headed socialite who poured into my ears a malicious stream of anti-Semitism. As neither I nor any of her other hearers had Jewish blood, it was possible to pass over her puerility with a smile. But she certainly could not have invented this ingenious rubbish herself, and it would be interesting to track down the methods by which Dr. Goebbels gets his propaganda through to individuals who still fondly imagine that they are neutrals.

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Censorship of comment makes neutrality possible, and the lack of political argument is wonderfully soothing—at least for a time. Without it no doubt there would be violent arguments, constant diplomatic protests and trouble both with the German and the British Governments. As it is I get much the same answers from various people I talked with—porters, gardeners and policemen, and so on. They were doubtful whether neutrality could last; but, as one workman said to me, "The people here don't bother their heads about the war at all. Not at all. And now with the scarcity of things they're getting their own troubles to bother about." Tea, rationed at ½ oz. a head hits the Irish poor very hard indeed. It is the principal drink of the country, not excluding Jameson and Guinness. Until now every countrywoman has always had a pot of tea stewing. Stew it as you may, ½ oz. of tea will not last long. Coal is the other great shortage. Gas goes off during the morning, heat off early at nights. Trains moving slowly and half-a-day late without proper fuel to run on. Great transport difficulties in moving peat supplies to the places where they're wanted. Other shortages are growing. A movement for eating only one bread meal a day: the badge says N.B.B.L. ("No Booze Before Lunch" I've heard it called) has not caught on, but strict rationing will soon take the place of voluntary abstinence if what I hear of the coming flour shortage is true. To-day the shops are still stocked with tempting supplies of all an English shopper has ceased to expect. Plenty of everything to eat; lashings of butter and milk and eggs. But reserves of non-Irish products are running out, and as Britain rations itself more strictly, Ireland must soon be very short indeed. All private cars are shortly to go off the roads; the black market in petrol cannot be otherwise outwitted. In six months' time the Irish countryside may have slipped back into conditions very like those of a hundred—or even two hundred—years ago. Buses are likely to disappear as well as cars. Many districts will be cut off with only horse traffic to link them with the rest of Ireland. I have stayed in country places where people were already having saddles refurbished, and considering the revival of pony-traps. More difficult in these days as the horse population is much less than it was a hundred years ago, and there will be difficulty in getting feeding stuffs for horses. People will not starve in Ireland. There will be potatoes and eggs and milk and some grain, and the population to-day is small in proportion to the acreage. But without coal or light or imported food, conditions will become very primitive. Farmers will have only rush lights if the cow calves in the night. In some of the remote districts of Eire these conditions have always existed, and the lack of light and communication will mean no new hardship. The area will be extended in which black-out becomes automatic and after dark the population settles down to tell stories until they drop off to sleep by the peat fire.

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British diplomacy in Ireland is in better hands, I think, than at any other time in the history of the two countries. Those who regret that the ports were given back to Ireland in 1938 forget that their restoration to the Free State did, in fact, materially improve our relations. Even people who are by no means friendly to this country spoke highly of Sir John Maffy, United Kingdom Representative in Dublin, and of his staff. Some of the good work that they do is offset by the quite unnecessary delays and miseries that Irishmen find in obtaining a passport to come to England. I believe the trouble is excess of work and shortage of staff rather than incompetence or lack of goodwill on the part of the officials. I know that things have improved recently; there is no longer a long queue waiting, sometimes for days together, outside the Permit Office as there was in the first days of its institution, but I have met English, as well as Irish, people who were nearly beside themselves with fury at their treatment in the Permit Office.

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The talk which some papers over here revived when the *Gneisenau* and *Scharnhorst* escaped about weather information being supplied by the German Legation in Dublin is frankly so much poppycock. German reconnaissance 'planes fly every day round the coasts of Ireland and can supply all the information about the weather that is required. Critic

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to M. Boothroyd.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

A North-East of Scotland farmer who received a letter from a Government department instructing him to go on with his ploughing as he had not ploughed his whole quota, replied that his staff was depleted and that the lambing season had come upon him so that ploughing would have to be suspended for a short period.

He has received a reply instructing him to postpone the lambing season for a month.—*Reynolds News.*

Congratulations to the man living in Fallowfield who has named his house "The Kremlin."—*Manchester Evening News.*

When a boy of 9½ years was being examined in an action for damages at Newry Quarter Sessions yesterday Judge Begley asked if he knew what would happen to him if he did not tell the truth. "I'll be sent to hell," said the boy, and his Honour replied: "That is true Christianity."—*The Northern Whig and Belfast Post.*

A 24-day trek from Burma to India to escape from the Japanese has just been completed by a British civilian party, including several women, one of whom, "Granny," was aged 77 and carried only her Bible and a picture of Mr. Churchill giving the V-sign, writes B.U.P.'s correspondent in Calcutta.—*Bulletin* (Glasgow).

LET MEN DELIGHT . . .

(After Dr. Watts).

"Breeders forecast a boom in dogs . . . Some are optimistic enough to suggest that there will be a big demand after the war by German breeders for British dachshunds and Alsatians."—*Sunday Express*, Feb. 1.

Let men delight to bark and bite
  If 'tis their nature to.
Let such for post-war vengeance fight;
  Dog-breeders do not so.

Our evil passions given vent,
  Peace must be long delayed;
War's accident was never meant
  To hinder future trade.

Though Nazis upon humans prey,
  Dog-lovers bear in mind
They are not wholly bad if they
  To animals are kind.

Dog-fanciers, we cannot vote
  Outcast among the nations
A people who on dachshunds dote
  And love their pet Alsatians.

Do good to the ex-enemy,
  Send solace for his woe,
For all the dogs of Germany
  Were sausage long ago.

When Nazi kennels are supplied
  With pups of British breed,
We shall with goodwill for our guide
  Take mankind on a lead.

Sagittarius

THE PATRIOTIC FURRIER

An indignant correspondent has sent me a bunch of circulars received from a firm of furriers. The furriers want skins: their potential customers are assured that they can prove their patriotism by supplying them. Now I have no quarrel with furriers as such, nor with people who clothe themselves in furs. It is, presumably, as legitimate to kill an animal for its skin as to kill it for meat. The furrier, therefore, is as respectable a tradesman as the butcher. But that either should seek to increase his turnover by an appeal to patriotism is contemptible. The appeal of the patriotic furriers is particularly nauseating to those who are interested in the conservation of wild life, and, especially, of the indigenous wild animals of Great Britain. The furriers invite irresponsible people to destroy some of our most interesting animals in the name of patriotism. They have not, however, the hardihood to suggest that virtue is its own reward. Patriotism has its price, and a full list of prices is the chief feature of the principal circular. Having introduced themselves as approved members of the Fur Trade Export Group, they announce that they collect all types of skins "to foster . . . the export drive"—not, it will be observed, to foster their own business—and they proclaim that "This is essential for the purpose of obtaining dollars to help the war effort."

A special leaflet, appropriately printed in red and blue on white paper, invites the supply of mole skins. At its head appears the legend "Practical Patriotism," at the foot "Approved by the Board of Trade." Whether it is the firm or its leaflet that the Board of Trade approves is not apparent, nor does it matter. In the teeth of the Board of Trade itself, if need be, I am bold enough to suggest that the mole is a more practical patriot than the trapper of the mole or the furrier who prepares and trades its skin. I do not challenge the importance of dollars, but I question whether all the dollars that might be paid for the skins of all the moles in England—and they are many—would balance the harm done by the removal of the moles. The mole has an insatiable appetite, strictly non-vegetarian. It lives, it is true, largely on earth-worms, which are great cultivators of the soil; but there are earth-worms enough and to spare and the mole is also a cultivator. The soil thrown up by the mole, when spread by a chain harrow, is a useful top dressing. In some soils and situations, also, the mole does useful work of surface drainage; but it is alleged against it that it destroys crops. Up to a point this is true, but it may be said with some confidence that it saves far more than it destroys. For where moles congregate to work near the surface and, thus, disturb—not feed upon—the roots of growing crops you may be sure that they have been drawn thither by an abundance of pests which would do far more harm. Moles are among the very few creatures that eat slugs and they feed greedily on various insect pests, which feed on and destroy the roots of growing crops. Because of the incidental damage done to crops by the hunting mole—and because its skin has a certain value—moles are widely trapped; but in so far as an increase of farm produce is an aid to winning the war, the mole, on balance a good farmer, is, if it only knew, a good patriot. In spite of the furriers, it is, fortunately, in no great danger of extirpation, partly because the top price for a mole is no more than ninepence.

The next special circular appeals for rabbit skins. Rabbits are, beyond challenge, harmful to agriculture, and the trapper might be forgiven for claiming that his not unprofitable business is patriotic service. But the circular, though it invokes the dollar which will buy the munitions of victory, does not, in terms, invoke patriotism. There are zealots who would have us extirpate the whole race of rabbits by chemical warfare; but they are unlikely to succeed. Rabbits are prolific and elusive; every trapper will fight to maintain a stock to provide the annual increase on which his trade depends and I hazard the guess that a majority of farmers like to have a few rabbits on the ground, because, for all that the pundits may say to the contrary, an occasional rabbit is, even in time of peace, a very useful addition to the larder.

For other desirable pelts one must refer to a comprehensive list in the main circular letter. The first thing that strikes one is that the eye of the patriot is averted from the rat. If the furriers would devote their energies to converting the pelts of rats to a fashionable fur one might forgive their claim to be the exponents of true patriotism. But, apparently, there is no money in rat-skins. It is truly patriotic to skin the stoat and badger, both of which destroy rabbits and the latter of which, certainly, if one excepts a very occasional rogue, does no harm to anything of value to men. The reward of patriotism is, in their case, modest. Stoats' skins range from sixpence to eighteenpence, badgers from two shillings to ten shillings only. The nearly extinct polecat, which would prey upon rabbits, will fetch from three to nine shillings. The highest prices are reserved for otters and martens—ten to forty shillings in both cases.

Otters, though beautiful and comparatively harmless, are already so mercilessly persecuted by the ignorant that the appeal of the patriotic furriers can hardly make their case worse. The case of the marten is little less hard. This rare and beautiful little animal once comparatively common exists precariously now in only a few places in the British Isles. The value of its pelt has been its undoing, and the race has long been near the verge of extinction in Great Britain and Ireland. Fortunately certain enlightened landowners have for some time done their best to save the remnant of the species, most of them with the ready help of their game-keepers and stalkers. I have some confidence that, even in these days of penury, they will withstand the temptations of lucrative patriotism, and, at the risk of social ostracism, will keep patriotic trappers off their territory and snap their fingers at the patriotic furrier.

Morys Gascoyen

CRISIS IN THE BOOK WORLD

THE book publishing trade has come to a crisis which, reported hitherto only in its trade papers, is worth wider discussion because the issues are of interest to the wider public of writers and readers. In common with nearly every trade, publishers have had to suffer restriction of their raw material and the paper now available for them is about a third of their pre-war requirements. From the beginning their ration was based on their pre-war consumption by tonnage, a system clearly open to objections, but perhaps the only one which a Government department could equitably operate. Most firms could now use all this basic ration on reprints of their past successes, standard works so to speak, whether educational or otherwise, and it is a matter of policy with each publisher what proportion of his ration he allocates to new books and to old. In passing, one may say it is also a matter of direct concern to authors, whose property in the way of royalties is thereby affected, and I see no solution that can possibly be agreeable to all. The author usually retains the right in his contract to recover his copyright if the publisher allows his book to go out of print. Theoretically, therefore, he can take his book elsewhere. The publishers propose, however, "a gentleman's agreement" amongst themselves not to take up such offers in wartime, so that the author's freedom to negotiate will prove illusory. And how far this is just to them or even legal I do not venture to pronounce. It is only a side issue to the main crisis.

The basic ration has been used by publishers according to their own fancy or conscience, as a glance at their lists will show. When criticism has been expressed by reviewers on the grounds that a book was not worth the use of paper in wartime, the criticism has been hotly resented as little short of censorship. The reading public has been divided according to the literary preferences of the individual, but it may be stated that such an attitude on the part of publishers is not easily reconciled with the claims made in the press and Parliament that they deserve special consideration as the guardians of culture. It is nigh impossible to arrive at a clear definition of the desirable and the undesirable, but no one can deny that a regrettable proportion of paper has been, and is still being, used for books which clearly do not fall into the first category.

So much for the basic ration. There has been, however, a supplementary ration, apart from paper which used to be tapped from printers' stock or other sources. This supplementary ration was obtained either from the Ministry of Information or from the Paper Controller on the advice of other Ministries, and was granted for books considered to be of national importance, whether for technical training or as propaganda. The pressure for this extra paper naturally increased as the basic ration was reduced, but the system worked without too much dissatisfaction, though the same tendency could soon be observed as with petrol. Every "nationally important" book was deemed a case for an extra allowance, while the basic ration was held to concern only the publisher's own interest. The Paper Controller, feeling perhaps the responsibility an unwelcome addition to his labours, decided to reinforce his position. In reducing the basic ration once more, he intimated that he had reserved a certain tonnage for books of national importance and this would be allocated on the advice of a committee of publishers. Forthwith the names of four gentlemen from the publishing trade were announced.

Now the first objection to this scheme was that this committee could hardly be impartial in distinguishing between the many claims submitted, and, moreover, the claimants were required to disclose a large amount of information about their own business—what they were doing with their basic ration and what it was. But at a specially convened general meeting of the publishers it was evident that there were objections of an even more serious character. A motion had been proposed which would have been nothing less than a vote of censure on the officers of the Association, and this fortunately was not pressed, as the officers certainly deserve better treatment in return for their thankless but necessary labours. Yet opinion seemed general that the new system was but the thin end of censorship and was liable to abuse. It soon appeared that each publisher had his own view on what books were nationally important. One pleaded for a Catholic breviary, another for a left-wing political testament, another, with no doubt equal sincerity, for works of light literature and fiction. Indeed, many seemed ready to dispense altogether with the supplementary tonnage rather than submit their books to a committee.

I do not think there is any real danger of the present system of independent publishing suffering State control. Those in authority are well aware of its value as a medium for free expression of thought. What the present crisis has brought home is the necessity for publishers (who by tradition are intensely individualist as well as rightly jealous of their independence), to put their own affairs in order, remembering that in the nature of things their works are designed to invite discussion and criticism amongst the public at large. If from their ration of paper they cannot find paper to print all the technical, political or philosophical books which they consider of national importance, then they should be able to nominate some person or persons of integrity and standing whom they can trust to choose between books of varying importance, but they must certainly expect their lists to be scrutinised critically at a time when the nation is fighting for its very existence. "C"

THE WEEK

I WONDER who it was who first said that one swallow does not make a summer, and why other people have quoted the saying ever since as a piece of profound wisdom. It seems to me one of the most inane of all proverbial utterances—inane, not because it is untrue, but because no sane man has ever yet hailed the first swallow of the year as the prologist of summer. Slightly less daring than the daffodil, the swallow, we are told on good authority, usually arrives in England in the middle of March. I doubt whether I have seen a swallow so early as this; but I saw one on Sunday last, April 5th—a day that, charming though some of its passages were, was no more like summer than I like Hercules. He did not even make what I regard as a decent spring.

Not that my heart failed to leap up in the normal fashion when I saw him. One can no more see the first swallow than one can celebrate New Year's Day without feeling that something pleasant has happened in the universe. The year for most of us is marked by the arrival of a series of Noah's doves. The first chaffinch, the first primrose, the first crocus, the first swallow, all persuade us somehow that the tide is on the turn. It is as though we had waked out of sleep into sunshine. It is, of course, all nonsense from any rational point of view, but we are not reasonable beings. I know a charming woman who hates the lesser celandine as if it were a gangster in the garden; but most of us, at first sight of the little yellow weed in spring, look on it with as friendly an eye as that with which we used to look on the buttercups of our childhood. The good world has began again—so we delude ourselves—and optimism is once more justified. This, perhaps, explains our unwarrantable liking for dog's mercury, coltsfoot, and the lawn-destroying dandelion. They are not only weeds, but prophecies. They are beginnings of that succession of New Years that never ends till midnight on the 31st of December.

And so, when one sees the first swallow, one is inclined to spread the news like a gospel. One of one's first questions to soldiers and civilians in the village inn is: "Did you see the swallow?" To few of them is it a boring question. The inn may have a notice chalked up on its door: "Sold out. No beer"; but inside are a few of the more self-sacrificing sort putting up with gin and whisky, and none of them are indifferent to the arrival of the swallow. One countryman, it is true, who believes in the law of compensation, says: "If you see a swallow early in April, you'll have rough weather for a fortnight." Luckily, in the last three years, the forecasts of the astrologers have undermined my belief in the human gift of prophecy. I no more believe that an early swallow is a harbinger of rough weather than I believe that he makes a summer. All I know is that, as he is blown about in the wind, he brings a new grace into the earth, and that he enables us to understand Noah's emotions when he saw the dove returning with the olive branch.

It is, of course, easy to exaggerate our feelings about Nature, if we are only normal human beings and not great poets; but this annual cheerfulness of the common man in March and April is not to be denied. We await the changes of the seasons as racegoers await the dropping of the flag at the starting post, when thousands of bosoms discharge their emotions with a hoarse cry of "They're off!" Something new has begun. We are witnesses of one more gallop—and, alas! how brief the gallop is!—in the perpetual novelty of Nature. We should, we believe, like the new world to last for ever; and most of us dream at times of a new world that will last for ever; but how admirable it is that we should even possess it every year for weeks at a time! To open the door at night and listen to the frogs singing in the pond—and in these days of crooning I think the frog's croak may justly be described as a song—is to be cheered by this sense of the general renewal. One feels equally optimistic on seeing the latest family of young pigs let loose on the common, squealing and scampering hither and thither in panic rushes. The man who is indifferent to the spectacle of small pigs dubiously venturing for the first time into the wide open spaces must have an imagination that is callous to the centre.

All childhood, with its employments, gives us this spring-time pleasure. At present the village children collect round the pond to imitate the soldiers who are encamped in the neighbourhood. Day after day, the soldiers bring their lorries to the pond to wash the mud from them. They swish bucketful after bucketful of water on to the wheels, and cleanse the bodies of the lorries with dirty cloths. The children, endless imitators, have made lorries of their own, some of them having got hold of the chassis of a bygone perambulator and mounted an upturned soapbox on it. These vehicles they bring to the pond as the soldiers bring their lorries. They say they are "out on removals"—which is their version of "manœuvres." Having ranged their baby lorries by the edge of the pond, they produce disused fruit-tins and use them as buckets for the washing of their perfectly clean wheels. Occasionally, one small boy deliberately misses the wheels of his vehicle with his spate of water, and catches another small boy's legs with it. Many of the children, indeed, seem to spend more time in dodging these canfuls of water than in lorry-washing. In the intervals of drenching their neighbours, however, the more serious-minded of the children dip rags into the pond and scrub the sides of their soap-boxes as though they were caked with mud after long night journeys through swamps. They, at least, are enjoying the war. Always a new game. First, tossing their tiny parachutes into the air: next, stoning flotsam on the pond in solemn imitation of bombing submarines: now going on "removals" and lorry-washing.

There have been moments when I was half-inclined to agree with Tolstoy that it was better not to bring a child into a world so evil as this. It is not easy to hold such a creed, however, when one sees children engaged in their avocations. The theory of voluntary race-extinction is reasonable enough; but a single happy child blows it to pieces. The little victims, as they have been called, do not seem to share the gloom of the pessimists. They are of the *carpe diem* school, and apparently find the world of 1942 as good as it was when Dr. Inge was a child. There are terrors, but there is no dullness. One small evacuee, passing the pond the other day, could be heard explaining to another small evacuee who was nervous in presence of a bullock on the common: "No, he wouldn't eat you, but what he does is to get you on the top of his horns and chuck you over a hedge." Thus England becomes as strange a country as Africa and all its prodigies—yet a country as pleasantly safe as it is pleasantly dangerous—a land of adventure that ends in a good supper and a comfortable bed.

Not that I have enjoyed the last week. I cannot, owing to the censorship restrictions, say what the weather was like: but it was not, except in broken pieces, the kind of weather that I have been longing for through the winter black-out. Still, as I have said, even the most melancholy of us, born under Saturn, cannot help feeling cheerful now and then. The meanest flower that blows may not invariably give us thoughts that lie too deep for tears; but an almond-tree in blossom, seen from the window of a railway train, has somehow or other a surprising effect on our spirits. How charmingly it brings the spirit of spring into the back garden of the ugliest—no, not the ugliest, but the dreariest, most commonplace — twentieth-century dwelling! There are those who despise the colour pink as something anæmic: they forget the almond-blossom, which transforms a suburb into an Arabia.

One can become at least a temporary optimist in a world in which almond-trees blossom, frogs croak, little pigs run helter-skelter, and one's own private skylark sings about the house half the day—a good bird in spite of what the American lady said who wrote a poem reproaching it for not singing half so sweet a song as Shelley sang to it.

But, of all the phenomena of April, that first swallow is, perhaps, the chief new-year-maker. So, at least, I thought, on Sunday evening, as I watched him battling with the wind under the arch of a perfect rainbow that shone against a background of black cloud to the east. Y. Y.

Bring out your dead
PAPER

CONTEMPORARY ART

THE director and trustees of the Tate Gallery are to be congratulated on their wartime acquisitions now on view in the National Gallery, and the picture-loving public must count itself extremely fortunate. This is a remarkable and cheering show, which becomes more cheering still when one remembers that, on account of bulk or inaccessibility, some of the most important things acquired (e.g., Henry Moore's big piece of sculpture) are not shown. The director and trustees have been lucky too: during the last three years they have received splendid gifts or bequests from Mr. Montague Shearman, Mr. Graham Robertson, Sir Hugh Walpole, Sir Michael Sadler, Lady Henry Bentinck, Miss Blaker, Mr. Hindley Smith, Miss Carthew and many others. All that picture-lovers have now to do is to go to the National Gallery and enjoy themselves; and the critic, having given the address, might fairly be asked to go with them. Nevertheless, without impertinence, he may linger a moment to point out how intelligent and courageous the Tate authorities have shown themselves.

The purchase in wartime of foreign art by official bodies is almost always conditioned by political and sentimental considerations, and almost always the result is lamentable. The purchasers for the Tate Gallery have not escaped clean and have bought three works by Topolski, unshown. On the other hand, neither of the two German works acquired is likely to please the politicians, and both are good—one is by Klee, the other by Ernst. To have secured two pictures by that almost forgotten, yet important artist, Anquetin, is an act of intelligence and more. The grand but horribly expensive pictures by modern French masters—Renoir, Bonnard, Vuillard, Sisley, Lautrec, Matisse, Utrillo, Modigliani, Forain (one of his better oil-paintings) and Cézanne (watercolour)—come, of course, by gift or bequest: the best are from the Shearman collection.

Probably the most surprising exhibit is Steer's *Walberswick*. This is not only a fine picture; it is a prodigiously daring one. Painted in 1890, it is in advance of anything that was being done in France at the time, save only by Cézanne, and by Seurat, with whose work it has some odd and doubtless accidental affinity. How the man who produced this glorious audacity could devote the last five-and-twenty years of his life to producing what he did produce is a mystery which some critic should attempt to solve. Another striking picture, bravely bought, is *Mexican Church*. Here is more mystery; for the painting is flanked by two insipid gouaches signed by the same artist—Burra. It was clever of someone to get James Ward's *Sides of Beef*, a delicious bit of painting which only a connoisseur would have chosen.

A collection of colour-printed drawings by Blake—let us hope that this time the Police will not mistake them for pictures by D. H. Lawrence and impound them—has been presented by Mr. Graham Robertson, of whom there is a full-length, full-dress portrait, of high historical interest, painted by Sargent in 1895. The Pre-Raphaelites have been attended to: there are six little things by Rossetti, a Burne-Jones, a Madox Brown and an attractive painting by Arthur Hughes. No fewer than eleven works by Sickert are shown (and six are in store): this is as it should be. Camden Town is represented by Gore—and Gore by *Richmond Park*, a thing of the greatest beauty—by Gilman and by Ginner. Of only a few of our more significant contemporaries are we reminded by their absence. Duncan Grant, V. Pasmore, Matthew Smith, Henry Moore, Paul Nash, Augustus John, Gwen John, Gertler, Hitchens, Applebee, Frances Hodgkins, David Jones, Piper and Graham Sutherland are represented, and, what is more, represented by well-chosen works.

After staring his fill in the National Gallery the amateur should make his way to the Victoria and Albert. Here is to be seen a collection of watercolours (1919-1939) which, in a sense, is complementary to the exhibition of oil-paintings. It has been made on eclectic principles, and has been arranged admirably. Distributed amongst the drawings are a dozen pieces of modern sculpture which make, perhaps, the best part of the show; for the distributor—and here one seems to detect the hand of the Director—decided evidently to give us not only pleasure, but some pleasant surprises.

CLIVE BELL

THE MOVIES

"Remember the Day," at the Odeon.
"Manpower," at Warner's.

One reason for preferring, in general, films to plays is the surface quality of even quite ordinary screen productions. How much energy goes to the creation of small detail! Behind the director, camera men and set designers are always busy with new close-ups and devices of continuity, and it is a poor film indeed which doesn't contain some moments of poetry for the eye, some lucky *trouvaille* in light and shade. This technical integrity is the saving grace of an art more cynical and debased than any, perhaps, the world has yet seen; it gives us unexpectedly, in the middle of fabricated nonsense, glimpses from a real world of cinema. There is a shot, for example, in *Remember the Day* which will outlive in my memory anything else in that film, charming though it is. Two lovers walk slowly across a square with a bandstand in the middle; the space, the patches of snow, the black trees and houses supply a magic which few script writers could have provided in dialogue. *Remember the Day*, directed by Henry King, is a charming and unpretentious piece, sentimental without being cloying, and though the love-story is told by means of the throwback, the effect is not, as so often, that of the vignette. Claudette Colbert, both in middle age and youth, gives a performance full of tact and charm, and the small-town school where she teaches is conveyed with a fidelity almost French. The children look human, and several of them—especially Douglas Croft as a victim of calf-love—act very well, too. John Payne, as schoolmaster and lover, though somewhat stereotyped in handsomeness, manages not to be acted off the screen by Miss Colbert, who indeed gives an almost faultless performance. Only those who go to *Remember the Day* in an actively mordant mood could fail to be touched by it.

Manpower is an extremely effective melodrama about the dangers and love tangles of emergency workers in a Power and Light Company. Out they dash, in rain and lightning, to mend the telephone tracks, to climb immense pylons and sustain appalling shocks and falls. The detail is fascinating; the pace and cutting are those of the best gangster films. I need only add that George Raft and Edward G. Robinson are magnificent at the storm centre. Miss Dietrich recaptures in a minor key her early triumphs. The climax outdoes anything the Lyceum may have known, but *Manpower* is an exciting piece, with a continuously brilliant surface.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"The Magic Flute" at the New Theatre

A *Traviata* given by the Vic-Wells company on its last visit to London was the worst performance of an opera that we have ever seen. After this declaration we hope readers will believe our praise of the new *Magic Flute*. The company has no voices that could reasonably be called great, except that of Miss Joan Cross, who did not perform on the first night. But Miss Rose Hill sang with taste, feeling and freshness as Pamina, and Miss Barbara Beaumont, though without the power necessary for the Queen of the Night, did very well in a terribly exacting part. Mr. John Hargreaves made a good Papageno, but the Sarastro music was feebly rendered. The concerted singing gave the greatest pleasure, and the orchestra played crisply. Almost all the singers succeeded remarkably in making clear the words of Professor Dent's excellent translation. The Vic-Wells opera, which hitherto has been unlucky in its decors, this time has employed a painter of uncommon talent Mr. John Armstrong. He has boldly, we would say unwisely, avoided even a suggestion of the XVIIIth century; and the opening scene in particular is too much out of keeping. It seems to represent a fleet of badly torpedoed ships: as the clouds in the later scenes look like damaged barrage balloons, the war seems to have obsessed the artist's subconscious. The scenes in the temple and on the banks of the Nile, on the other hand, are admirable. The producer, Mr. Kurt Joos, has been skilful and inventive: the miming of the ordeal is particularly telling. This *Magic Flute* is altogether refreshing and rewarding.

Correspondence

COLONIAL FUTURE

SIR,—I write as one who accepts and has always maintained the main thesis of your article on the "Future of the Empire"—namely, that we have to transform the Empire into a society where "the dependencies . . . . will feel themselves to be willing partners, not slaves or servants." It is against this background of agreement that the following observations ought to be considered. To effect the transformation we desire we shall have to do some new things; but we shall also have to do some old things, and do them with added vigour. We need to think, not only of a new departure in policy, but of continuation in policy. After all, there are things worth while in Canada to-day which can be traced back a hundred years to Durham, and sixty years behind him to the Quebec Act; similarly, there are things worth while in Nigeria which can be traced back through Lugard and Mary Kingsley and Buxton to Wilberforce. We have to live up to the best achievement of our own history. And it's precisely because we intend to go forward that it's worth while looking back.

Moreover, the problems are not merely moral ones; it isn't only virtue, but hard thinking which is called for. To quote once more the experience of Canada and Nigeria—wheat growers and palm oil producers have both been afflicted (the former far more savagely) by a falling price level. The causes are complicated, and even a sinless Empire could not by itself apply the remedy. The remedy must be sought in international economic policies to which imperial policies can be adjusted. We achieved this adjustment in the nineteenth century by one method: we must strive to achieve it again by a new method. Success won't come easily, and it won't come unless others work with us, and we with them.

Finally, I would plead for more recognition of the diversity of the Empire. Malaya is a Dependency, and the Malayan did not fight; Malta is a Dependency, and the Maltese are fighting. The Gold Coast Regiment has fought superbly; I believe most of the West African peoples would fight.

All the same, this willingness-to-fight test is being applied very suddenly, because for a long time colonial demilitarisation has been preached as an absolute good.

Or—shifting again to the sphere of economics—Nyassaland has done pretty well out of Imperial Preferences, but preference hasn't suited Nigeria. In Northern Rhodesia a new policy of development is needed, but in Bechuanaland Protectorate the policy of the past ten years should be continued. Examples of divergency could be multiplied *ad infinitum.*

W. K. HANCOCK

ARMS EXPENDITURE

SIR,—There is ample evidence to confirm "Polycritic's" view that increasing efforts are being made to attribute our present serious position to what is called the policy of disarmament. But none of the critics is able to inform us when this actually took place, and to what extent. Some seek refuge from the statistical facts by giving to disarmament a meaning other than its customary one. For them disarmament may mean an inadequate degree of re-armament; stability of armaments; an increase in armed strength of considerable proportions, but still insufficient to satisfy the needs of the time. Disarmament, in all such usage, implies an actual increase in the strength of, and expenditure on, the Defence Services. Those who think of the word disarmament as necessarily meaning a reduction in the expenditure on armaments, as well as a decrease in armed strength, must take into account the extent to which the term disarmament has become ambiguous. But it may be of some interest to place on record the statistical data on this phase of British pre-war policy, and thus enable judgments to be made on the sound basis of factual evidence. From 1925 to 1933 the most striking feature of expenditure on armaments is that of stability. The total costs fluctuated between extremely narrow limits. The highest was in 1925–6 when costs were £119,377,000 and the lowest in 1932–3 at £102,990,000. Thereafter, the annual expenditure rose steadily, as the following table clearly reveals:—

Year	Defence Services	Inc. over 1932–33	% Inc. over 1932–33	% Inc. over Previous Year
1933–34	£107,872,000	£4,882,000	4.74	4.74
1934–35	113,870,000	10,880,000	10.56	5.56
1935–36	136,949,000	33,959,000	32.97	22.26
1936–37	186,072,000	83,082,000	80.66	35.86
1937–38	262,117,000	159,127,000	155.47	40.86
1938–39	378,618,000	275,628,000	267.62	44.44
1939–40 (Estimates)...	535,426,381	432,436,381	419.88	41.41

Whether the actual results obtained from this enormous expenditure were, from the point of view of effective armaments, commensurate with the financial burdens entailed cannot be reasonably estimated. And there is no reason to suppose that even these costs will appear to the critics as being enough. But we had regular assurances at the time that the expenditure was sufficient and our armed strength fully adequate to meet any emergency.

W. T. MCVITTIE

EQUALITY OF SACRIFICE

SIR,—In his first contribution on "Equality of Sacrifice," Mr. Davenport remarks of a factory worker, "He has probably noticed that the directors' standard of living—measured in entertainment, motor cars, food, drink, cigars and travelling—has gone up and not down." It would be interesting to know of what industries or companies Mr. Davenport was thinking when he wrote this, or whether he has any statistics to support this view.

Consider first the spendable income of a director with a salary of, say, £5,000 a year; he would be paying in tax and sur-tax on the rates in force at the beginning of 1939 £1,576, and on those in force at the beginning of 1942 £2,837, a reduction in income of £1,261.

Apart from reduced spendable income, the progressive limitations that have been inevitable in the domestic sphere, the tightening of petrol supplies, food rationing, the reduction in train facilities, and scarcity of beer and tobacco, make it difficult to see how the mythical director has improved his standard of living in the ways Mr. Davenport states.

I do not wish to imply that these restrictions have not been justified, in fact they ought perhaps to be more severe; I do, however, think to suggest that they are non-existent is hardly likely to lead to accurate discussions of an important subject.

L. J. CADBURY

[Mr. Davenport writes: "I have no statistics but my eyes. Being a director of an industrial company I have got around and seen enough to justify every word I wrote. There are ways round most restrictions; there are loopholes in every law. I can give instances of "wangles" to Mr. Cadbury which would no doubt shock him. Before E.P.T. not all directors were living and travelling 'first class.' Now they are."—Ed. *N.S. & N.*]

SIR,—In his comparison of soldiers' and industrial workers' wages, Mr. Nicholas Davenport ignores the allowances that may be obtained from the War Service Grants Committee.

The majority of the 200 men in whom I am specially interested receive war grants and those with families of three and four children receive sums comparable with the civil pay they were receiving providing the soldier's clothing and keep are taken into account.

Let me quote just two cases: (*a*) civil pay £5 12*s*. 6*d*. soldier's pay 14*s*., family allowance for wife and four children, including allotment, 50*s*., war grant 34*s*., giving a total of 98*s*.; and (*b*) civil pay £4 7*s*. 6*d*.; soldier's pay 14*s*., family allowance for wife and three children 45*s*. including allotment, war grant 18*s*., total 77*s*.

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JONATHAN CAPE

UNEQUAL PAY IN A.R.P.

SIR,—A woman of the U.S.S.R. gives her service to the State knowing her work is rewarded on an equal basis to that of the man she replaces. ; that in event of injury or fatality any dependent will be compensated in full; she goes to work in trust. A woman of Britain is expected to live on (frequently) a third less income than a man. The work she does, even if identical in every particular to the work of a man, is paid at a lower rate. In my own experience I worked as an ambulance driver through nine months of London's blitz. The pay was more or less equal, the men receiving 70*s.* for 72 hours per week, with meals allowed. Women received 47*s.* for 48 hours per week. But even then the thought rankled that the man beside me was considered more valuable than myself in event of injury. Now the difference has become exaggerated; a grateful Home Office (women now under conscription) rewards our voluntary services of those earlier days by putting us on a new 84 hours per week rate of women 52*s.*, and men 74*s.* Compensation remains as unequal.

Is my resentment unreasonable? 52*s.* for 84 hours per week is about 7½*d.* an hour. The job may be practically non-existent at the moment, but it has not been all pleasure. Am I to continue wasting my young energies to preserve this privilege of superiority for the men of this country? What sort of women are we, children of those who fought for our emancipation?

AMBULANCE DRIVER

ZOSHCHENKO

SIR,—Your correspondent, Mrs. Fania Pascal, is correct when she states that the majority of the stories by M. Zoshchenko, published in this country, date back to the 'Twenties, but the fact that she is not acquainted with his more recent writings does not necessarily mean that he has written nothing since 1928, as she seems to assume. He had a collection of stories published by Sovietsky Pisatel, Leningrad, at least as recently as 1935. It contains some reprints, but also new additions and a preface by the author. Other volumes were published by Logos (Riga) in 1938 and 1939. Some of the stories in these, such as "Life's a Fairy-tale" and "The Anti-Noise Campaign," belong unmistakably to the period of technical development of the middle 'Thirties. Some make reference to the 20th anniversary of the Revolution and to the Centenary of Pushkin's death, i.e., to 1937.

However, most of the stories published round about 1939 have lost their characteristic sting and become much weaker from the literary point of view. They would have little chance of acceptance by an editor of an English periodical.

The reasons for this change in the character of the stories are most likely complex. Yet I have no doubt that in them M. Zoshchenko remains a faithful recorder of changes in the life of Soviet Russia, even if one of them may be a greater intolerance of criticism.

ELISAVETA FEN

LARGE AND SMALL SHOPS

SIR,—The need of a thorough going plan for the concentration of the distributive trades is obvious, but no such plan exists. Such concentration as has taken place has been entirely haphazard. Shortage of supplies and financial weakness have caused the closing of many small shops; on the other hand, many large stores in Liverpool, Birmingham, Southampton and elsewhere have been "blitzed" out of existence. Now, whilst it is true that the small shopkeeper constitutes a special social problem, this problem will not be solved by setting up the small shopkeeper against the large store as your Industrial Correspondent appears to do.

The interests of the community call for the closing of some small shops and some large stores. The questions to be answered are: which and how many? A register should be taken of existing shops, which should be required to satisfy the local authority that their continuance in business is essential to meet the needs of the community. I suggest that this task be given to the Local Price Regulation Committees, which already have the power to control the opening of new shops. Whilst ease of access will require the continuance of a number of small shops, the necessity for an adequate selection of stock, which is unavoidably difficult for the small shopkeeper to obtain, will call for the maintenance of some of the large central stores.

It should not be impossible to devise some system of compensation for those businesses which had to close down. Those which were allowed to remain should come under the close and constant watch of the Local Price Regulation Committees as to labour conditions, profits, etc., so as to prevent their taking advantage of their monopoly position.

LEONARD COHEN

MONYA PUCKLE MAKS A MUCKLE

SIR,—That self-styled waster—or if he prefers the word, wastrel—who signs himself Y.Y. is blatantly attacking the self-determination of nations, and you, sir, to your everlasting disgrace are wickedly supporting him. Can you not curb his twisted tongue? I have told him before that "Many a mickle makes a muckle" is just plain downright silly nonsense, but this wretched Irishman writing in English despises the views of Scots on their own tongue and by corrupting the speech of Dunbar and Burns is undermining the co-operation of the chief one of the democratic nations in their struggle for existence: even your own English Oxford Dictionary will tell you that "mickle" and "muckle" are forms of the same word and have identical meanings. The honoured name of "Meikle" is another form. The vile and meaningless corruption of the noble motto of thrifty Scots which is current among some uneducated Englishmen and is thrust down our throats by an emigré Irishman must be torn from current usage if the co-operation of Scotland in the world effort is to continue undiminished.

I hope that I shall not be forced to stop my 26-years-old subscription to THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION through your contributor's attitude to the language of my fathers. A puckle mair o' this and ye'll hae a muckle revolution!

AY AY

VICTORIAN HEROINES

SIR,—In his review of Mr. L. A. G. Strong's *English Domestic Life*, Mr. Raymond Mortimer declares that Miss Yonge's novels "excited what was called the weaker sex to exploit their presumed weakness—to be uncandid, ostentatiously cowardly, and submissive." I hope that mine is not the only voice to be raised in protest. Submissive, yes; but was our dear outspoken Ethel May uncandid? And what about Kate Caergwent? Can anyone describe Wilmet Underwood as a coward, who, at the mature age of sixteen, undertook the bringing-up of eleven children on an income of £180 a year? I strongly suspect that these heroines are but names to Mr. Mortimer, and that he knows little of Miss Yonge beyond the passages quoted in Mr. L. A. G. Strong's anthology. If so, let him turn at once to *The Daisy Chain* and *The Pillars of the House*, and if he enjoys them as much as I think he will, let him make public apology for this baseless libel.

GEORGINA BATTISCOMBE

[Mr. Mortimer writes: "I knew that I was asking for trouble. But if my dislike of Charlotte Yonge's moral values is unjust, it is at least not founded on ignorance. She strikes me as a dangerously morbid writer. I must content myself with one example. The heroine of *The Daisy Chain*, who is painfully short-sighted, is held up to our admiration when she refuses to wear spectacles, because her dear dead Mamma did not like her to use them."—ED., "*N.S. & N.*"]

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What sort of man really was Sir Humphrey Gilbert?

No doubt you recall the difficulty which Lytton Strachey had in understanding the Elizabethans. He devoted a page or two to the subject at the beginning of his *Elizabeth and Essex*. He found them uncongenial, alien, mysterious. "With very few exceptions," he wrote, and proceeded to make the surprising exception of Shakespeare—"the creatures in it (the Elizabethan Age) meet us without intimacy; they are exterior visions, which we know, but do not truly understand. It is, above all, the contradictions of the age that baffle our imagination and perplex our intelligence."

I find that very odd. I do not say that there are no difficulties in understanding the Elizabethans; but I find them altogether less incomprehensible and mysterious than the Victorians, with their endless pre-occupation with the moral and the determination to see everything through its prism. A character like Mr. Gladstone seems to me far more difficult to grasp than William Cecil or Ralegh or Francis Bacon; Queen Victoria, though altogether simpler, cruder and more obvious, is to me less explicable than Queen Elizabeth, for all the latter's Renaissance subtlety. And I wonder whether this feeling is not typical of our generation as against Strachey's?

There is good reason that it should be so. For I often think that the twentieth century is much more like the sixteenth than it is the nineteenth. There is the insecurity, the unease, the constant sense of danger. Europe given up to ideological conflict, each country with its own Fifth Column, Catholic or Protestant, as the case might be, the exiles, politics completely and confessedly Machiavellian, men stopping short of nothing in the pursuit of power, life hazardous, exciting, extreme. All very "unlike the domestic life of the dear Queen." So much so, that most people born and brought up in the peace and security of the Victorian Age—a very rare and exceptional interlude in human affairs, which it is an illusion to generalise—are *ipso facto* incapable of understanding the conditions of this. (Perhaps that is one reason why the old men made such a mess of our affairs for us.) While, on the other hand, I am convinced that if you really want to understand the conditions of the age we live in, you might do worse than take a course of study in Tudor history.

Our own experience enables us to understand the men of the sixteenth century infinitely better than the godly Victorians did. Look what unreal guys they made of such men as Hawkins and Drake, Grenville and Gilbert, or Walsingham and Leicester: Protestant heroes with not a blot on their spotless record. (There was a Catholic view opposed to this, which made them out to be devils; but that was equally nonsense, only in the opposite direction.) Was there ever such a caricature as Kingsley's *Westward Ho!* from this point of view? I used to enjoy it as a schoolboy, but returning to it a year or two ago I found its complete incomprehension of the age, its picture of the Elizabethans in terms of Victorian muscular Christianity, the very language in which it is written, insufferable.

The Victorian view of Humphrey Gilbert is a case in point. You remember the famous account of Gilbert's end in Hakluyt which they loved to quote: how the little frigate in which he was sailing was—

> near cast away, oppressed by waves, yet at that time recovered; and giving forth signs of joy, the General, sitting abaft with a book in his hand, cried out unto us in the *Hind* (so oft as we did approach within hearing) "We are as near to Heaven by sea as by land." Reiterating the same speech, well-beseeming a soldier, resolute in Jesus Christ, as I can testify he was.

In fact, a very perfect, gentle knight, the Victorians concluded; whereas he was very far from perfect, and the reverse of gentle. They omitted to notice that Edward Hayes, who wrote the narrative in Hakluyt, went on to a distinctly critical summing-up of Gilbert. He was, in fact, a much more human, a more curious and intriguing personality.

The truth about Gilbert we are now in a much better position to judge, as the result of the admirable edition of his writings and correspondence about colonisation, by Dr. D. B. Quinn. (*The Voyages and Colonising Enterprises of Sir Humphrey Gilbert*. With Introduction and Notes by D. B. Quinn. Hakluyt Society, 2 vols.) It is a very fine piece of Anglo-Irish scholarship, most learned and at the same time discriminating; so different from the portentousness of German scholarship, with its lack of sense of proportion, and often, of any common sense at all. And the magnificent old Hakluyt Society deserves a tribute, too, for bringing out such an admirable and thorough piece of Elizabethan scholarship in the midst of the war. No reason now for not knowing what sort of man Humphrey Gilbert really was; in my view this young Irish scholar has a good grasp of his curious personality, which struck his contemporaries and arrested their attention.

He was the very type of the projector in a society which, at its summit, was much given to projecting. The inner man in Gilbert, in his maturity, was possessed by his dream of colonising the New World, the northern half of it, with Englishmen. Bound up with this vision—for he was a visionary—was a great deal more than meets the eye: much geographical and some economic speculation, the passionate interest in discovery, the pursuit of a North-West passage to the Far East which would give us a route free of Spanish control and under our own. But various other projects occupied his busy mind at other times. He began with an interest in the colonisation of Ireland, which in his case, as with his followers Ralegh and Grenville, led him on to that of America. Returned from Ireland, he had a hand in a mining and alchemical project, a monopoly for turning iron into copper and antimony into quicksilver.

Perhaps the most interesting of his projects to the modern mind is his educational one—it has an extraordinary modern flavour about it. It was for the founding of a third university, an Academy in London under the aegis of the Crown, for the education of Crown wards and sons of the nobility and gentry. Gilbert had remarked that many of these grew up uneducated and unfitted for the position they would hold in society. He had a complete plan for the education of the members of the governing class; to make it effective it was to be compulsory. The whole stress in their education was to be laid upon fitting them for their function. It was not to be mere book-learning as at the universities, though there was a foundation of that—Gilbert himself was an educated man, brought up at Eton and Oxford. Modern languages were to be taught as well as the classical; stress was laid upon oratory, as an indispensable accomplishment in public service. (Gilbert was a good, if impetuous, speaker himself.) The Professor of Moral Philosophy was to instruct in politics and civics, of Geometry in the theory and practice of artillery, of Mathematics in navigation, astronomy and the use of nautical instruments. The Doctor of Physic was to teach chemistry, medicine and first-aid for the wounded; a lawyer was to instruct the students in as much law as would enable them to plead their own cases and fit them for public office as J.P.s, etc. Nor were the lighter arts forgotten—dancing, horsemanship, heraldry, music—all had their uses in the training of an Elizabethan gentleman.

Gilbert even proposed that the library should be equipped by making it compulsory for publishers to present a copy of every book published—a suggestion which was later acted upon; while professors and lecturers were to publish regularly the results of their researches—a measure which not even the most recent of University Commissions has always been able to enforce. Dr. Quinn sums up the scheme as a considered plan providing for the education of the new governing class, "who were becoming conscious of their desire to run it (i.e., society), for an education that would fit them for practical experience in Government, war, navigation and commerce." But the English have never been in favour of planning their educational system, and nothing came of it.

Gilbert was not only a visionary, but a *machtpolitiker*, not merely an idealist and schemer, but a soldier of impulsive courage and ruthless determination. In Ireland the young colonel on his black horse became a legendary figure; throwing himself into the thick of the fight, he bore a charmed life; he did not scruple to put whole garrisons to the sword if they refused, after warning, to surrender. He held that "no conquered nation will ever yield willingly their obedience for love, but rather for fear." He subscribed to Machiavelli's views on politics. He was an authoritarian, holding the highest view of royal prerogative—to the offence of the House of Commons of which he was a member. These apparent "contradictions" were no doubt the sort of thing Strachey could not understand. Yet there are examples of them all round us to-day.

Gilbert's personality was by no means wholly approved in his own day. Men's reactions to him were apt to be of mixed attraction and repulsion. Like Grenville he had an imperious, uncertain temper; there was an unbalance in his temperament which made him over-sanguine, boastful, easily depressed. There may have been a streak of sexual ambivalence in him, according to one of his speculating partners. Even the devoted Hayes saw that there was that in him which prevented him from being the fit instrument to carry out his own projects; a visionary in the kingdom of ends, he was too impatient as to means. Something of a gambler with his own and other men's fates, he reaped nothing but failure. Yet he was the sort of failure from whose attempts flow the greatest creative possibilities for others to explore and develop.

Nor is that consideration remote from our circumstances to-day. He was the first to envisage and plan in detail the colonisation of North America by men of English stock. That has its importance when we consider that the fulfilment of that dream is the prime fact in modern world-history and is proving itself the dominating factor in our fate as a nation in Europe and the world.

A. L. Rowse.

A VICTORIAN ADVENTURE

The Pre-Raphaelite Tragedy. By William Gaunt. *Cape.* 10*s.* 6*d*.

I began reading Mr. Gaunt with some nervousness—so common has it become to manufacture vulgarly ironical books about the Victorians. But he writes with judgment, knowledge and taste. While alive to all that is comic in the history of the Pre-Raphaelites, he never sinks into a patronising snigger, and his work is calculated to dispel many false opinions.

The Pre-Raphaelites are now usually thought of as delicate aesthetes. This is due chiefly to the popularity of Burne-Jones—and partly perhaps to Gilbert's satire in *Patience*, which was directed in the main against Whistler and Wilde. Burne-Jones was deeply indebted to Rossetti; but if, like William Morris, he must be considered as continuing the Pre-Raphaelite Movement, he altered its direction. He differed signally from the founders alike in his temperament, his ideals and his practice. The members of the original Brotherhood themselves from the start showed divergencies, which increased with the years. But it is essential to distinguish between the two phases of Pre-Raphaelitism, the first typified by Holman Hunt, the second by Burne-Jones—and two painters could hardly be more antagonistic. The movement began with "Truth to Nature" as its first commandment; obeying which Holman Hunt, Millais, and Charles Collins painted out of doors indefatigably, in extreme discomfort and even at night. This should logically have led to Impressionism—the technique best adapted to representation. But the Pre-Raphaelite impetus was inherited, not by a Monet, but by a Burne-Jones, so that a movement aiming at realism is now classified as the apotheosis of unreality.

Mr. Gaunt situates very justly the original Brotherhood:

> The group had acted as the medium for the Romantic spirit of the century whose essence was a love of the past and of unsophisticated nature. It was linked with Romantic Poetry, with the Gothic and religious Revival, with the reaction against the Industrial Revolution; with Wordsworth, Keats and Shelley, Pugin and Pusey, the anti-Victorian thinkers Ruskin and Carlyle, though with the Italian masters of the later Middle Age, who provided its curious name, it had very little to do. It had also the realist, reforming spirit of 1848.
>
> The very contradictions of the plan became important. There could be no such thing as absolute truth to nature . . . Pre-Raphaelitism was a reform and a dream. . . . It was an escape from the age and a means of converting it.

I would add that the Brotherhood took amazingly little interest in any painting except their own. Rossetti never went to Italy; Holman Hunt spent two years there, but seems hardly to have noticed the works of art. By nature, Hunt was a moralist, Rossetti a poet, Millais a business man. If Pre-Raphaelite painting was (as I think it) a poor affair, this was not due to mistaken theories, but because the artists had so little feeling for paint. Bad theories do not make bad paintings, any more than good theories make good paintings. Constable and Courbet talked nonsense and produced masterpieces—nonsense, incidentally, often very like Holman Hunt's. The trouble was that none of the Pre-Raphaelites possessed the natural gifts of a Constable and a Courbet.

Ford Madox Brown was, I think, the most painter-like (and he, it may be noted, studied and appreciated great painting). Rossetti had an intensely poetic imagination that in his early work makes itself felt despite the feebleness of the execution. Millais had the whale of a gift for representation: having also a talent for imitation, he produced under the influence of Brown and Rossetti some pleasing works. Apart from *The Hireling Shepherd*, Holman Hunt was no more of an artist than Samuel Smiles. What of the second phase? Burne-Jones had the taste of an artist, and studied the Quattrocento masters; he also had the imaginative power to create with pencil and brush a legendary world of his own invention, peopled by epicenes drooping under the burden of their enigmatic emotions. (It was a world that appealed immensely to the cultivated disciples of Pater, and also to such business men in the Midlands as were disgusted by the ugliness from which they derived their wealth.) To deny this considerable achievement would be absurd: to maintain that Burne-Jones drew like a master, or that he had any feeling for pigment and colour, seems to me almost equally paradoxical. And what of William Morris? He was as indifferent as Hunt and Millais to the Old Masters; but he was by nature more of an artist, I think, than any of the others except Rossetti; and his designs for wall-papers and textiles have stood the test of time better than any paintings the Movement produced. Also he was a grand man. If Socialism is to bring not merely refrigerators in every home, but a change of heart, it will derive more from Morris than from the brilliant but vain, envious, and acrimonious Karl Marx.

Mr. Gaunt rarely indulges in any aesthetic judgments such as I have had the temerity to sketch. But he writes no less perceptively about the individual characters than about the historical setting, providing a wealth of absurd and touching detail. Rossetti buying a Brahmin bull because it had eyes like Janey Morris; Rossetti's poems, exhumed from his wife's coffin, having to be saturated with antiseptics; Rossetti, already enfeebled with chloral and whiskey, finding offensive references to himself in *The Hunting of the Snark;* Rossetti, when Morris tried to charm him with an Icelandic saga, growling: "How can one take a real interest in a man who has a dragon for a brother?"; the aged Trelawny sitting to Millais for *The North-West Passage* only on condition that Mrs. Millais took six Turkish baths; Darwin asking Woolner how far down the body inexperienced models blushed—"A French artist had said they blushed all over. Darwin would like to know the experience of cautious and careful English artists." American experts, Mr. Gaunt tells us, have been busy at Wilmington sifting every detail about Rossetti's "stunner," Fanny Cornforth. Her story was that she first met him in the old Surrey Gardens; Mr. Gaunt suggests "perhaps the Strand"; from what is known as "oral evidence" I humbly offer the Embankment. From the same source (Charles Ricketts) I have a touching detail, hitherto I think unpublished, about the night of Elizabeth Siddal's death. When he came in, Rossetti took off his boots before creeping upstairs; finding his wife had killed herself, he rushed in his despair straight to Madox Brown, walking all the way from Highgate to Kentish Town in his stockinged feet.

Mr. Gaunt is excellent on the relation between Rossetti and Miss Siddal:

> She trailed slowly towards him, a melancholy doll, set in sluggish motion by the virile, expansive gestures of the warm Latin. . . . No one knew what she was thinking of or if she thought at all. She was that double enigma of Victorian England, a woman of the refined small middle-class. She had, of this class, the habit of "keeping herself to herself," which deepened into an unfathomable reserve on being introduced into a clever and freakish group of artists. . . . The discipline of the Kent Road, where she lived in prim, clean poverty with her mother and father (an "optician and cutler" from Sheffield) gave her the inscrutability of a sphinx. It aroused in him a spirit, an inspiration of conjecture. . . .

Such was the illusion on which one side of Pre-Raphaelitism was based. The other is typified by Holman Hunt fanatically pursuing realism to the shores of the Dead Sea:

> Holman Hunt perched motionless and absorbed on his stool, protected from the blaze of sun by an umbrella, was painting the dismal scene as if his life depended on it. In the crook of his left arm was a double-barrelled rifle and under his coat a repeating pistol, these weapons being so disposed as not to hamper the use of palette and brush. Before him were a portable easel and canvas on which the mountains were beginning to emerge in a sunset glow. And tethered on the beach was a white goat, its hair falling in long matted ripples, its hooves cracking through the glittering crust to the black mud underneath, and creating an uneasy patchwork of salt pebbles and map-like wrinkles around them. . . . This was the very place to which the ancient scapegoat might have staggered to die; and so conscientious was Hunt that he waited for the date of the Day of Atonement in order to begin work at the proper season.

Hunt was too conscientious, too thorough, too slow, to become rich; but he got £5,775 for one picture. Millais earned forty thousand a year. Even Rossetti made between two and four thousand a year. It is worth noting that Courbet was born two years before Madox Brown, Manet one year after Millais—and they remained poor. Impressionist pictures, I am told, are now much in demand by the profiteers of the Black Market. The Victorian business men were not so sharp.

Mr. Gaunt calls his story a tragedy, I gather, because the protagonists starting with generous aims failed through defects of character. But one only of them seems to me to show the stature of a tragic figure—Rossetti. The others fulfilled their destinies, honourable, pathetic or absurd; but Rossetti, though a handful of poems have made him immortal, gave only a small part of what he had to give:

And though thy soul sail leagues and leagues beyond,—
Still, leagues beyond those leagues, there is more sea.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

AMERICAN SCHOLARSHIP

Business and Slavery. By PHILIP S. FONER. *Oxford University Press.* 24s.

New Liberties for Old. By CARL L. BECKER. *Oxford University Press.* 12s.

At a recent conference of the National Peace Council on Anglo-American Relations, the Director of the American University Union spoke with a justified bitterness at the slowness with which American scholarship and the interest of American history and institutions have received recognition in this country. That was a summary of a long and not very edifying story. In no field has James Russell Lowell's "certain condescension to foreigners" lingered more unnecessarily upon the scene. While a good deal of professional scholarship in the United States has suffered from the expert's bias towards the exploration of the minute and the insignificant—like the scholarship of most other countries—at its best, it is unsurpassed in the world to-day. Its contributions, in particular, to English literature and history have been as extraordinary and as valuable as English contributions to their American analogues have been disappointing. And while only three British universities give any serious attention to American studies, it is broadly true to say that no American university of any academic standing has failed to make the study of this country a pivotal part of its work. For names like those of Haskins and McIlwain, of Hanford and Haller, of G. L. Kittredge and J. L. Lowes, we have no comparable names to offer in return. It may, indeed, be doubted whether there is a single adequately equipped library of American history and literature—even including the British Museum—in this country. Certainly there is nothing to equal the English collections at the Library of Congress and Harvard, of the New York Public Library and the supreme collection which bears Mr. Huntingdon's name.

Mr. Foner's book is a first-rate example of the type of historical investigation which has been growingly characteristic of the last generation. It is a study of the impact of business connections between New York and the South on the attitude of business men in the metropolitan city to slavery. It is admirably written; it is based on exhaustive and intelligent research; and it has an interest which far transcends the local issue with which it deals. For while, in form, it is a study of ten years of American history, in substance it is an investigation of the greatest "appeasement" period in the experience of the United States. It explains why men who mostly knew that slavery was at once evil and indefensible, nevertheless stooped to every possible expedient to evade it for fear of the effect of the "irrepressible conflict" on their economic interests. The analogies with the Baldwin-Chamberlain epoch are remarkable. There is the view that slavery is a matter for the South; just as Nazism was held to be an issue with which Germans only are concerned. There is a kindred fear of outspokenness, an eagerness to grasp at any accommodation, the eulogy of any plan which seemed to promise evasion of the central issue. On the Southern side there is the same insolence, the same bold insistence that the evil thing is in fact good, the same challenge to face its implications, that characterised Hitlerian diplomacy after 1933. When, with Lincoln's election, it was clear that, at long last, "appeasement" was no longer possible, there emerged rapidly the same refusal as emerged in Britain in September, 1939, to compromise with "evil things." It is not, perhaps, wholly without interest to-day to note that one of the three or four central figures in the "appeasement" movement, right up to the last, in New York was Mr. William B. Astor, the father of the first peer of that name.

Professor C. L. Becker is one of the most eminent of living American historians, and this volume of occasional papers on democracy conceals a massive scholarship behind a mind that combines profundity and charm with equal grace. Professor Becker is a modern version of the Jeffersonian democrat. He is a sceptic; and that makes it impossible for him to accept any of the fashionable isms of our time. He understands, but rejects, Communism. He realises why revolutionary traditions disintegrate; but he explains with fervour why they are certain to revive. He pleads for some of those old-fashioned virtues upon which Jefferson laid emphasis—reason, justice, the right to free discussion, the necessity of recognising the inevitability of change. It is difficult to do justice to the ease and sweep with which the whole course of modern history is made to illustrate his theme; but I should like particularly to emphasise the brilliant essay on "When Democratic virtues disintegrate"—as good a clue to the moral issues of our time as I have read in many a day. Professor Becker shows, what Maitland showed so supremely, that a great scholar who is interested in the philosophic implications of his subject has no rival as an expositor for the general reader.

Mr. Foner is a young scholar, writing his first book; but it exhibits a power of organising a great mass of material into a clear narrative which explains a vital problem and promises a distinguished career. Professor Becker is now one of the veterans, perhaps as deeply loved as any teacher of his generation. The reader of these essays will understand why without any difficulty. But I should like to emphasise that both books are merely typical of a great literature too little of which is known in England. We have come to recognise, since the last war, the vitality and distinction of the American novel. It is time we learned the high quality of American effort in other fields. I should like to think that a British Government whose Prime Minister himself is half American would build the necessary foundation for that full study here of American institutions by giving us some Regius Professors of American civilisation in British universities. We ought not to wait for the third world war before seeking to understand the United States.

HAROLD J. LASKI

FOR ADULTS ONLY

Put Out More Flags. By EVELYN WAUGH. *Chapman and Hall. 8s. 6d.*

It would be interesting to know what Mr. Waugh's large public makes of him; also, for that matter, to know for certain what Mr. Waugh makes of his large public. A vituperative young man, using the unpopular weapons of economy, proportion, an eager brilliance inventive but well controlled, possessing a social sense which is dead-accurate but fundamentally without humour—it is not in these terms that one draws the normal outline of a popular novelist. Besides, he writes about people who are, in two senses, real. They are never hypothecated or bowdlerised to suit public sentiment, and often, despite the usual disclaimers, they contain ingenious portraits, built up in the manner of a *collage* from appropriate fragments of old friends. Thus according to the rules his novels ought to be limited to a public of those in the know. They should be left out on the table in appreciative flats or stuffed into the gas-masks of highbrow sergeants. Instead of which they sell like hot cakes.

It is worth while considering why. Evelyn Waugh is one of our rare male novelists to write as an adult, and he is flattering enough to postulate an adult, sophisticated audience. The early novels were writen from this simple position. They made no personal statement, they hid their healthy dislikes under his elegance, his beautiful timing for each invention. But since *A Handful Of Dust* appeared the author himself has been taking shape behind his creations, and in this latest book his position is quite clearly defined. Catholic; good. There isn't much danger of such a peppery individualist sharing the general conformity (burgundy, the Pyrenees, invective, pub-life, Pantagruel) among lay English converts; although one may regret that the Fr. Rothschild S.J. of 1930 will not be revived. Solitary; also good. He can modulate his spleen without previous commitments. Romantic; a superficial view might write off this aspect of him as plain reactionary. Unrelenting; the frustrations and punishments which occur in each novel share the logic of Kafka. And very grown-up.

His popularity, it is to be supposed, depends chiefly on this last characteristic. There is an audience ready to be quelled by the spectacle of a sophistication which does not trouble to wink, a knowledge of the world which can traffic in the dodges of three iniquitous continents, and an assumption of equal familiarity with the apparently not dissimilar climates—at least during the timeless epoch of *Vile Bodies*—of Downing Street and the stews.

The more discriminating, while they laugh, make a minor reservation, however. Doesn't Mr. Waugh overdo it a little? Aren't the great ramshackle houses now too finely observed? Don't the casual details ring too carefully true? One cannot imagine any of these young men, shameless as they are in the conduct of life, doing up the bottom button of their waistcoat; and is not each overtone of adultery—in not somewhere obvious like Berkeley Square but a knowing by-street, say Montpellier Walk—recorded with rather too modish an air? This is a fault of taste which may be inseparable from the novelist's intention. English novelists are generally soft hearted and their sense of social values is rarely acute. Evelyn Waugh, within his chosen limits, applies a hard head to those values; where he fails it is from too facile a cynicism in face of the present day; too indulgent an eye for any idiosyncrasy that evokes an age in which the ordinary citizen was more likely to be a boor than a cad.

This reservation does not, however, affect the pleasure to be got from his negative side. *Put Out More Flags* is to be praised without any reserve so long as the author is at the attack, direct or implicit. The best of the book shows that his commando has little to teach him in the technique of the sharp destructive raid. The Connolly passages, for example, stand among the modern show-pieces of brilliance and economy of means; and each prim recital of military behaviour, from battalion exercise to death in action, emphasises again what we already knew: that Mr. Waugh has a unique gift for pinning down the occasionally memorable astonishment of plain truth. The plot does not matter; it imposes a vague pattern on selected instances of incompetence, lying, theft, graft, fornication, unkindness, ineptitude, snobbery, cowardice, drink and unnatural vice during the first year of the war. The English world is neatly, and to some extent justly, divided into those who get away with it and those who don't, by a judge who has a weakness for the former. A young man trickles through to page 255 with so unforced a gift for self-preservation that it is embarrassing to leave him a hero in the epilogue. There is an aesthete who is heavily raided at intervals, but without quite enough trouble being taken to present him as a credible target. There is a typical product of Mr. Waugh's romanticism—the totally sophisticated, intelligent, rich, ravishing woman of thirty "dressed to inform rather than to attract," who is drunk during most of the book. Amateurs of the earlier Waugh will complain that she is modelled rather too lazily on Lady Metroland before her second marriage. There is a first-rate statesman's widow, and there is a small collection of old friends still pertinaciously doing their stuff.

One more minor complaint. Lord Pastmaster—who has sobered down into rather a dull young

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man—is written off as thirty-three whereas he cannot be a day over twenty-eight. Those who read all the Waugh novels with the respectful attention they deserve notice these things.

ALAN PRYCE-JONES

THE EXPANSION OF GENETICS

New Paths in Genetics. By J. B. S. HALDANE. *Allen and Unwin.* 7s. 6d.

Haldane's latest book is based on a series of lectures given in the University of Gröningen, Holland in March, 1940. The audience was presumably a mixed bag of scientists, and the book is something between a completely popular exposition such as *Heredity and Politics*, and a definitely technical presentation. The incautious amateur, lured on by the brilliantly simple exposition of the basis of genetics with which the book opens, will soon find himself called upon to face sentences like: "Here photophobia is the first symptom. Then, when the skin is exposed to light, we have erythema, freckling, atrophic areas, telangiectases, and finally epithelioma or sarcoma, which is generally fatal before the age of fifteen years." But the reader would be well advised to trust Professor Haldane that the conditions referred to by these horrid names do in fact lead to the melancholy conclusion which he describes; for if he skips rapidly over the laboratory Latin and Greek, he will find in fairly plain English an account of some of the most important work in genetics which has gone on in England during the last decade.

Genetics is one of the newer branches of biology. It was born in the years immediately after 1900, when Mendel's fundamental work was disinterred from the Proceedings of the Brunn Natural History Society in which it had lain hidden for 50 years. In its earliest years, English scientists played a large part in its development; it was in fact Bateson who gave it the name by which it now known. But after his death, genetics suffered a decline in this country, and has not yet taken its due place in our scientific organisation. That it should now seem within measurable distance of doing so is largely due to the efforts of Haldane. He has not only himself produced a very impressive body of original research, but has acted as guide, stimulus and critic to a much larger quantity with which his name is not officially associated. This book is not by any means exhaustive of the new paths which exist in genetics, but it does cover nearly all the fields in which Haldane, either at first or second-hand, has been the pathfinder.

If a scientist is a man of strong individuality, his character may be expressed in his work as definitely as an artist's in his paintings.

When presented with a summary of this kind, one is powerfully impressed by the specific character of Haldane's work. It is, first, based upon extremely broad knowledge and interests. Probably his most important achievement has been to show, concretely and in detail, the relevance of genetics to the general problems of biology. Thus two of the fields in which his influence has been most far-reaching have been the genetical theory of evolution and the relation between genetics and biochemistry; and he has, of course, also been among the most successful geneticists who have tried to relate their science to human affairs.

The second characteristic of Haldane's work is what might be called its simple-mindedness. He has, to a wonderful degree, the capacity to discover, within the scope of a large general problem, some absolutely basic aspect of it which can be exactly formulated and solved with such conclusiveness that nobody can gainsay it. For instance, his main contribution to the theory of evolution was the theoretical examination of a most drastically simplified situation—an infinite population, no overlapping of generations, no migration; and his approach to the study of development was to concentrate on a full biochemical understanding of the simplest possible case, the formation of the two or three substances concerned in flower-pigmentation. Such bold simplification has its disadvantages—the "middle and left parties" of the Russian geneticists have rather unfairly claimed that Haldane's work on evolution is undialectical; but it also has enormous power. A reader of this book will hardly fail to be convinced that it has, in Haldane's hands, so far paid greater dividends than any other approach current in this country.

C. H. WADDINGTON

THE SINEWS OF WAR

The Battle for Supplies. By E. V. FRANCIS. *Cape.* 8s. 6d.

The defeat of Germany by blockade is the subject of much less optimism than it was during the opening months of the war. This is probably a good sign, for the belief that we could starve the enemy into surrender, that "those far-distant storm-beaten ships on which the grand army never looked" would again prove the decisive weapon, was, no doubt, behind the timid and complacent strategy of the time. In point of fact a large degree of indulgence, excusable in our dealings with neutrals, but not in our dealings with Italy, made the economic war almost as phoney as that on the Maginot Line. It was the conquest of France, the intervention of Italy, and finally the invasion of Russia which sealed Germany off completely from the outside world, and is now beginning to encourage hopeful enquiries as to whether Hitler may not be beginning to feel the pinch. *The Battle for Supplies* provides the data for such speculations and does so very well.

It would seem that the enemies' chief headaches are: food, labour, textiles, transport, ferrous alloys, petrol and lubricants. The food situation is probably not serious in Germany and would hardly be so elsewhere in occupied Europe if it were not for the use of foodstuffs for making war material. Labour is almost an incalculable, the supply of textiles is no doubt a source of some anxiety, it can to some extent be met by ersatz production, but the manufacture of substitutes is at times rather like the parturition of mountains. The chapter on transport is of peculiar interest—we are sufficiently familiar with our own shipping supply problem, but we tend to forget that of the enemy. European communications are based upon sea traffic, the railways were never meant to stand the strain to which they are now being subjected by the British Navy, and the extent of that strain and the new disorder in Europe which it must eventually provoke is explained with clarity and erudition by Mr. Francis, and this is, if not the best, at all events the most enlightening part of the book.

Vanadium, tungsten, chromium, nickel, bauxite and manganese are all of the utmost importance in the manufacture of modern weapons, and all except the last two are extremely scarce in Europe; vanadium, indeed, is not found in Europe at all. Unfortunately no indication is given of the size of the reserves bought by Germany before the war. It must, for instance, be known how much nickel was exported by Canada and how much vanadium by S.W. Africa and Rhodesia. It is on petrol and lubricants (especially on lubricants) that one pins one's greatest hopes, for here there must be not only large reserves distributed behind the entire battle front, but also a continual flow from well to refinery, if war is to be waged at all. Despite Rumania and despite the manufacture of synthetic oil, Mr. Francis expresses cautious optimism—this must have been before the battles

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of Rostov and Moscow, and certainly before the present Russian policy of attrition. I think it is fair, therefore, to conclude from what he says and from what has since happened, that unless Germany gains a new source of supply next year she will face a serious crisis.

If this be the case, the strategical implications are all-important. In the spring of 1940, and again in the spring of 1941 the Nazis held the initiative, they were at liberty to strike whenever and wherever they wished; they could thus force upon their opponents a dangerous dispersal upon exterior lines, thus magnifying the already great disparity of force. This spring the direction of the offensive is likely to be determined for them by an intolerable thirst for oil. That is an enormous disadvantage for the attacker, and if it should lead to a reverse or even a stalemate in the summer campaign, the dearth of oil might begin to have a tactical as well as a strategic effect, in which case I think that the end would be in sight.

Whether the premises of this argument are sound may be judged by reading *The Battle for Supplies*. It is a good book, but it would be very much better if it were illustrated with maps.

QUENTIN BELL

Mr. Gogarty's new novel *Going Native* (Constable, 10*s*.), reviewed in our issue of March 28th, was mistakenly called *As I Was Going Down Sackville Street*.

Week-end Competitions

No. 636

Set by Raymond Mortimer

A first prize of two guineas and a second prize of half a guinea are offered for the best versions of the following poem:

Icare est chù ici, le jeune audacieux,
Qui pour voler au ciel eut assez de courage :
Ici tomba son corps dégarni de plumage,
Laissant tous braves coeurs de sa chute envieux.
O bienheureux travail d'un esprit glorieux,
Qui tire un si grand gain d'un si petit dommage !
O bienheureux malheur plein de tant d'avantage,
Qu'il rende le vaincu des ans victorieux !
Un chemin si nouveau n'étonna sa jeunesse ;
Le pouvoir lui faillit, mais non la hardiesse :
Il eut pour le brûler des astres le plus beau ;
Il mourut poursuivant une haute aventure ;
Le ciel fut son désir, la mer sa sépulture :
Est-il plus beau dessein ou plus riche tombeau ?

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Monday, April 20.

2. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 633

Set by V. S. Pritchett

We are promised a Spartan life this year. Imagine that the Government appeal to the public to give up love in order to increase the efficiency of the war effort. The music-hall singers would be asked to popularise the idea. The usual prizes are offered for two verses of a song to be entitled and containing the line " Doin' without love."

Report by V. S. Pritchett

This competition seemed to attract competitors. Was it the prolonged East wind and the late spring which caused such eagerness to trail behind Mr. S. J. Sharpless, say, chanting:

Keep those heart-throbs to yourself,
Ol' man Passion's on the shelf.

Or Conscript's sad request?

Don't come into the garden, Maud,
For what's the bloomin' use ?
Don't come into the garden, Maud,
The war has cooked our goose.

And an original note was struck by a nameless competitor who knows the popular song lore of historical, and specially Biblical, analogy. Noah backs up Mr. Bevin:

The lioness said to the lion " Scram ! "
'Cos I'm going to lie down with the lamb—
And you, Mrs. N., can scrap the pram—
We're doing without love !

The general tone of lament was broken by S. G. and one or two others, who jumped at the patriotic injunction in the first verse, but hinted at a black market in the second. As S. G. says:

Say folks, can you picture poor old cupid
With his bow and arrow, guess he must feel kinda stupid,
But will he parket
Or start a new black market,
Now that we're doing without love ?

I enjoyed Sir Robert Witt's unlikely lines:

A lady called Lysistrata, and 'istory says it's true,
Said stop this bloody fight, dear girls, and this is what we'll do.

And the always apposite Towanbucket:

Is it neurotic
Or idiotic,
It's patriotic
Doin' without love.

Several sentimental and four-square entries had merit, noticeably one by A. A. W. Congratulations must go to an evacuated Civil Servant in Wales who has found celibacy depressing to the mind, but an astonishing tonic for the body. " Chirpy as a bird," I believe, is his phrase. On the whole, I liked Sinjun's factory blues best, and after those the grim and neat plausibility of Mr. S. J. Sharpless's entry.

FIRST PRIZE

Guess ah got dem fact'ry blues
Ah'm been tremblin' in ma shoes
doin' without love, doin' without love,
doin' without you, baby.
Dat dere Cripps guy got ma honey,
Said that ah spent too much money,
bummin' with you, bummin' with you,
bummin' around with
ma baby.
Now, when I get all repressed
And ma heart sticks in ma chest,
Dat means A'm just doin' without you,
doin' without you, baby.
So, if you hear that ma production
Comes from sweat, and not seduction,
You'll know I c'n be doin' without love,
doin' without you
maybe.

SINJUN

SECOND PRIZE

Keep those heart-throbs to yourself,
Ol' man Passion's on the shelf
For the duration ;
Gotta give romance the go-by,
It's the thing to beat the foe by,
What a grand sensation !
Lay off yer pettin', yer kissin', yer neckin',
And as sure as there are stars up above,
Stick to good clean fun and the war'll soon be won—
Doin' without love.

Toughen up, kid ; de-rouge that face,
Put Quisling Cupid in his place,
It's total war ;
Austerity's the cutest thing,
Makes you want to shout and sing—
Sex is a bore.
We can be friends—but it musn't go further
If you want to give Hitler the shove ;
Churchill's tabooin' it—everybody's doin' it—
Doin' without love.

STANLEY J. SHARPLESS

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Points from the Directors' Report and the Statement issued to the Shareholders by the Chairman, Sir George Lewis Barstow, K.C.B. The 93rd Annual General Meeting was held on 2nd April, 1942, at Holborn Bars, London, E.C.1

ASSETS AND INCOME The assets of the Company are now **£375,413,502,** of which 94 per cent. are invested in the United Kingdom and the Empire. The income during 1941 was **£56,643,498.**

ORDINARY BRANCH The net new sums assured were **£24,803,928.** On participating policies a bonus of **£1** per cent. will be paid on claims arising by death or maturity of endowment during 1942 for each 31st December on which the policy was in force subsequent to 31st December 1939.

INDUSTRIAL BRANCH The revenue premiums were **£24,858,403.** On participating policies a bonus of **16s.** per cent. will be paid on claims arising by death or maturity of endowment during 1942 for each 31st December subsequent to 31st December 1939.

GENERAL BRANCH The revenue premiums were **£2,620,651** arising from Fire, Sickness and Accident, Employers' Liability, Marine, Motor Insurance, etc.

APPROVED SOCIETIES The total amount expended on benefits was nearly **£4,150,000.**

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Entertainments

EDUCATION IN U.S.S.R. Special first performance of Soviet Films, "The New Teacher," and Shorts, at Scala Theatre, W.1., Wed., April 15th, 7 p.m. Tickets 1*s.* 6*d.*, 2*s.* 6*d.*, 3*s.*, 4*s.*, 5*s.* from S.C.R., 98 Gower St., W.C.1 (EUSton 2315). Ask also for details of Whitsun course at Buxton.

RUSSIA To-day Society. Grand Dance at Holborn Hall. Saturday, April 18th. 7 p.m. Al Tabor's band. Tickets, 2*s.* 6*d.*, from 150 Southampton Row.

UNITY Theatre invites you to a dance at the Royal Hotel at 7 p.m. on Saturday, April 11th. Phil Cardew and Alan Kane. Tickets 2*s.* 6*d.*, obtainable from Unity Theatre. Euston 2381 and 5391.

UNITY Theatre presents "Sabotage," by John Bishop, at 7 p.m., every Thurs., Fri., Sat. and Sun. Members and affiliates only. Members, 2*s.* Tickets 1*s.* 6*d.*, 2*s.* 6*d.*, 3*s.* 6*d.* 1 Goldington St., N.W.1. Euston 5391.

Lectures, Meetings and Exhibitions

ETHICAL CHURCH, Queensway, W.2. April 12th, at 11.30, IMMANUEL LEWY: "Retaliation or Forgiveness?"

HAMPSTEAD Ethical Society. April 12th, 2.45 p.m. New address, 31 Broadhurst Gardens, N.W.6 (close Finchley Rd. Met. Stn.). Mr. J. Redfern Collins: "The Need for Democratic Unity."

SIR RICHARD ACLAND will be speaking on the subjects covered by his recent books, *The Forward March* and *What it Will be Like*, on the following dates: CHELTENHAM, April 10th, 6.45 p.m., Princess Hall, Ladies' College. *Organiser:* 160 Leckhampton Road, Cheltenham. GLOUCESTER, April 11th, 6.45 p.m., Shire Hall (Council Chamber). Arranged by the W.E.A. LONDON, April 20th, Town Hall, Wembley, at 7.30. *Organiser:* 16 Mountpelier Rise, South Kenton.

Will anyone interested to co-operate in making any of these meetings successful get into touch with the Organiser at the addresses given, or write to their friends asking them to do so.

MORLEY College, 61 Westminster Bridge Road, S.E.1. Evening classes for men and women (6.30-8.30 p.m.). Subjects include: Philosophy, psychology clear thinking, economic history, contemporary literature, art of writing, public speaking, play production, arts and crafts, languages, music (choir, orchestra and "Listening to Music,") fencing, folk, Greek and ballet dancing, keep-fit. *Fee for one subject for summer term opening April 13th, 7s.* Public Lectures Mondays at 6.30 p.m., beginning April 27th: "Fundamentals." Lecturers include: Lord Northbourne, J. D. Bernal, B. K. Mallik, Dr. A. E. Morgan, P. Lafitte. *Course fee, 3s. 6d. Further particulars from the College Secretary.*

COME and hear Dr. J. Horn on "Health and Medicine in the U.S.S.R." at the British Drama League Studio, 9 Fitzroy Square, W.1. Sunday, April 12th, 6.30 p.m. Free.

PRELIMINARY Notice! Mr. Joseph McLeod will speak on "The New Soviet Theatre" at Wigmore Hall, W.1., Sunday, April 19th. 3 p.m. Tickets 1*s.* and 2*s.* 6*d.* from the Russia To-day Society, 150 Southampton Row.

SPEECH Fellowship, 9 Fitzroy Square, W.1. Sat., April 25th, 2.30, Poetry Reading Round Table, tea and discussion. Admission 1*s.* 6*d.* Week-end course, in speech, drama, choral speaking. May 16th, 17th. Particulars from Hon. Sec.

Lectures—continued.

PRESS Freedom. Mass Meeting, Central Hall, Westminster, S.W.1, Saturday, April 11th, 1942, 2.30 p.m. Speakers: Dr. C. E. M. Joad, Michael Foot, T. L. Horabin, M.P., Dr. Edith Summerskill, M.P., Aneurin Bevan, M.P., D. N. Pritt, M.P., Richard Coppock. Admission Free. Organisers: National Council for Civil Liberties, 11a, King's Road, S.W.3. 'Phone SLOane 5279.

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY. Conway Hall, Red Lion Square. Sunday meetings, 11 a.m. April 12th: Prof. G. W. Keeton, M.A., LL.D.: "The Future of the Pacific."

TOYNBEE Hall, 28 Commercial Street, E.1 (Aldgate East Stn.). A special course of eight lectures on Stage-Craft, with demonstrations, will be given in the Theatre at 3 p.m. on successive Sunday afternoons, commencing April 19th. The syllabus comprises Production (Mr. Norman Marshall), Stage Setting (Mr. Richard Southern), Stage-Lighting (Mr. Harold Ridge), Stage Costume (Miss Norah Waugh), and Making-up (Mr. John Burrell). The course has been designed primarily for teachers of Drama Classes, Club Leaders, and Amateur Producers generally, but it is available for all who are in any way interested in the art of the Theatre. Fee for complete course 10*s.* 6*d.*; single lectures, 2*s.* Early application for enrolment should be made to the Registrar, Toynbee Hall, E.1.

LEICESTER Galleries, Leicester Sq. Old Master drawings. Men of the R.A.F., by Sir William Rothenstein. Paintings by Ivor Hitchens.

Appointments Vacant and Wanted

None of the vacancies for women advertised in these columns relates to a woman between 20 and 31 unless such a woman (a) *has living with her a child of hers under the age of 14, or* (b) *is registered under the Blind Persons Acts, or* (c) *has a Ministry of Labour permit to allow her to obtain employment by individual effort.*

SURREY County Council. Appointment of Psychiatric Social Worker. Applications are invited for the post of Psychiatric Social Worker for duty at Netherne Hospital, near Coulsdon. Candidates should hold the Mental Health Certificate, and be experienced in Mental Hospital duties. Salary scale £250 x £10—£300 per annum, together with the Council's War Bonus award. The commencing salary will be at a point on the scale according to experience and qualifications. The appointment is subject to the provisions of the Asylums Officers' Superannuation Act, 1909, and to the Council's Staffing Regulations, and the successful candidate will be required to pass a medical examination. Applications, stating age, experience and qualifications, and whether married or single, should be accompanied by three testimonials, and be sent to the Medical Superintendent, Netherne Hospital, Coulsdon, Surrey, not later than Wednesday, April 22nd, 1942. DUDLEY AUKLAND, Clerk to the Council. April 1st, 1942.

STANDING Conference of National Juvenile Organisations: Applications are invited for the post of administrative officer to be attached to the headquarters staff of the National Council of Social Service. Principal duties will be to act as Secretary to the above Conference. Applicants should, therefore, have experience of youth work and committee procedure. Salary £300 to £350 a year according to qualifications. Applications, stating age, qualifications, with copies of three testimonials, to the Secretary, 26 Bedford Square, London, W.C.1, by April 20th.

SERVICES Central Book Depot. Applications are invited for the post of Senior Library Assistant. Candidates must be of British birth and nationality and should have a wide knowledge of current literature. They would be required to assist in the sorting, selection and purchase of recreational books for H.M. Forces, and should have passed the Intermediate Examination of the Library Association, or its equivalent. The work is of an interesting but exacting nature. Salary £208-£26-£260 per annum. Applications, stating age, qualifications and experience, together with copies of not more than three recent testimonials, should be sent to the Officer-in-Charge, Services Central Book Depot, Finsbury Barracks, City Road, E.C.1.

CAN you take charge of or assist in clubs for girls in H.M. Forces? Knowledge of catering, snack cookery or organisation of informal recreation. Wilts, Lancs, Yorks, Dorset and Wales. £80-£120 resident according to experience, non-resident salaries to scale. Apply by letter to Personnel Department Y.W.C.A. National Offices, Great Russell Street, London, W.C.1.

WANTED for School for Backward Boys Gardening Instructor. Married couple considered if wife prepared to work as lady help. Write giving full details to the Secretary, Petton Hall, Burlton, Salop.

YOUNG Dutch couple (artists), expecting baby, require domestic help. Modern flat, Putney Heath. Very independent. Time for study, etc. Good pay. Box 857.

WANTED intelligent, adaptable girl, fond out-door life, help Kindergarten teaching, care and supervision of children. Wensley House School. Epping 2340.

THE Fire Brigades Union, Bouverie House, Fleet Street, requires the following clerical staff: 2 shorthand-typists and a ledger clerk. Apply, in writing only, to STAFF MANAGER.

WORKING Housekeeper wanted for lady with failing sight. Queen Anne House, Surrey. Large garden. Sense of humour, patience necessary. Box 850.

Appointments—continued

TWO Leader-Organisers (women) for rural area in Wiltshire. Experience of mixed activities and club leadership desirable. Salaries £250 p.a. Applications, with copies of three recent testimonials, to the Employment Officer, National Association of Girls' Clubs, Hamilton House, Bidborough Street, W.C.1.

WANTED. Assistant to Warden of small Settlement for social work in mining area. Main duty girls' club leadership. Salary £80 to £100 p.a., resident. Apply Warden, Settlement, Elvington, Dover.

SEPTEMBER. Married couple, with or without children, or other suitable applicants required on resident staff of girls' school, West Midlands. Good qualifications necessary. Subjects: Mathematics, Geography, English, Latin and Elementary Science. Must be in sympathy with school which is not run on stereotyped lines. Adaptability and a sense of proportion essential. No supervision out of school hours. Box 871.

EDITORIAL Asst. wtd. Applications to The Dairy Farmer, 10 Tavern Street, Ipswich.

CERTIFICATED Teacher (dismissed C.O.), 31. Trained horticulture, horticultural exemption, needs job instructor in Horticulture progressive school with large-scale food production programme. Older children essential. Box 868.

AUSTRIAN Medical Student (5 years' study), seeks employment. W. SCHWALB, Chepstow Villas, W.11. Bay. 1754.

LADY seeks post, two years' exp. Co-ed. School, garden and children. Box 862.

KINGSTON or district. Just leaving Commercial College, Shorthand - Typist, Private Secretary, seeks post, unfit military service, 28, reliable alien. Box 864.

DUTTON One-Week Shorthand. First lesson free. Write Dept. N.S., 92-3 Great Russell Street, W.C.1.

Specialised Training

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CONTENTS

COMMENTS 249
THE DELHI NEGOTIATIONS 251
RIOM. By Freda White 252
AUX ARMES, CITOYENS ? 252
THIS ENGLAND 253
A LONDON DIARY. By Critic . . . 254
TWO POEMS. By Frances Cornford . 254
PLANNING FOR THE WALKER. By C. E. M. Joad 254
DELIGHTFUL. By Y. Y. 255
THE MOVIES. By William Whitebait . 256
PLAYS AND PICTURES 256
CORRESPONDENCE 257
From B. A. Hutchinson; R. Fraser Reekie; Walter Loeb; Lady (Ernest) Simon; G. E. Toulmin; Olive Arnot; Wilfred Pawle.
BOOKS IN GENERAL. By V. S. Pritchett . 259
REVIEWS : Page
A Critic in a Thousand. By G. W. Stonier 259
The Tangle in Palestine. By Leonard Woolf 260
The Army. By Desmond Shawe-Taylor 261
Detection. By Ralph Partridge . 262
WEEK-END COMPETITIONS . . . 263

UNITED STRATEGY

THE Russian thaw has begun. From Leningrad to the Donetz, the biggest puddles in the world impede movement. Soon they will be drying; and the Russians, looking at their achievements, their resources; looking at the toughening of their own armies and the disappointments of the German, assert with more confidence than ever that this spring and summer will be theirs, and not Hitler's. It is true that all along the front the Germans, at very great cost, have been able to hang on to advanced fortified positions which they may hope to use as the springboards of their offensive. That is a dangerous fact; so is the Russian failure to free Leningrad or the Crimea. But it is equally true that the approaches to these German springboards are dangerously narrow for the German supply columns, and that Russian troops and material that might have been expended in their reduction are still intact, fresh and mobile. The Russian High Command has given the world such proof of its power to conceive, co-ordinate and execute a grand strategy.

A survey of the Anglo-American sectors is very much less reassuring. The return of Laval to power at Vichy is a sinister portent. The Germans are boasting that he will co-ordinate the French fleet with theirs: at the least he is likely to give them a free route to the African front through France and Tunis. He is at the head of the French Government—for Marshal Pétain is scarcely more than a wailing ghost. Darlan remains in command of the French forces, and he and Laval detest each other; but that feud between thieves is little enough for honest men to pin their hopes to.

But it is not individual items of bad news from Europe or the Bay of Bengal that are the principal cause of public uneasiness. Even the gravest defeats—military, naval or political—can sometimes be accepted as inevitable setbacks in the progress of a strategic design. The plaguey fact about the present situation is that a well-co-ordinated strategic design on the part of the United Nations is not apparent at all, and such evidence of the British plan as does appear is not such as to impress either "the man in the street," the House of Commons, or—it is evident—our Allies, as effective.

That co-ordination is lacking is only too clear from the fact that the Russians should at intervals publicly renew their appeals for offensive action in the West. The Russian commanders apparently believe that offensive action can contribute to the defeat of Hitler this year. London may have valid reasons against this view; if so only a deplorable lack of co-ordination can prevent them being made plain to the Russians in the sort of joint staff conversations which ought to have been in progress for months. Can nothing even now be done to remove the dangerous barrier of distrust that exists, for reasons that should no longer be operative, between Britain and the U.S.S.R.?

The utterances of British statesmen still suggest a continuance in high places of the perilous theory that "with time on our side" we can afford to treat 1942 as a year in which Britain and America are still only assembling their forces for decisive action at some later date. In the meantime the impression is given that this defensive strategy means, in effect, an attempt to defend every exposed point on the world front at the same time, with resources which in the process get dispersed so thinly that at point after point they are overwhelmed. It is dangerous to go on talking about the vastly greater resources of the Democracies when every day they are diminished by an enemy which understands modern methods of war and in particular knows, for purposes of political warfare, how to exploit the weakness of an Empire in which subject races resent an old-established domination.

The American press has suggested that General Marshall's visit to London is the outcome of President Roosevelt's determination to persuade the British authorities of the urgency and possibility of a second front in Europe now. Dismissing this as an irresponsible over-simplification, it is reasonable to suppose that at least General Marshall purposes to discover the military difficulties, and if possible, to find how far they can be overcome. He has arrived at a moment when the question whether there is something radically wrong with the whole machinery of our strategic control has become a political issue as serious as was, not many weeks ago, the same question in relation to the control and direction of our industrial production. American experts may be more alert to the need of full military co-operation and a unified strategy than the British; we call attention to a book, reputed here to be a best seller in the United States, which is just published here with the title of *Defence will not win the war*, by W. F. Kernan, a lieutenant-colonel in the U.S. Army (Heinemann, 6*s*.). It is a forcible pamphlet which argues, amongst other things, for a land offensive in Italy.

Sir Edward Grigg's article in the *Times* calling for the creation of a Great General Staff and the appointment of a "non-political" Chief of Great General Staff, has already won the most powerful support—and the publication of the article itself, backed by the *Times* editorial columns, was sufficient evidence of the strength of the agitation in this sense already in progress behind the scenes. The announcement that Lord Louis Mountbatten already occupied the post of Director of Combined Operations has naturally set people asking whether, if such a post is regarded as necessary and possible for Commando operations, it is not equally necessary and possible for the direction of the total armed forces of the Empire.

The problem—nominally one of organisational method—is in fact a political issue because of its repercussions upon the position of the Prime Minister and Minister of Defence. When the demand for a Ministry of Production was first raised, Mr. Churchill apparently believed that such a post was an impossibility because it would disastrously interfere with his own functions as the supreme director of the total war effort. He resisted the demand up to the moment where it became apparent that the country and the House